THE MILITANT

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Workers, Out On May Day!

For nearly two years, the most important countries of the capitlist world have been writhing in the grip of an unprecedented economic crisis. In the United States, as in the most other lands, industry has been prostrated, trade clogged up, agriculture driven into a chaotic position. All of its unexampled power, its enormous resources, its dominant position in world economics and politics, its lavish wealth, has not prevented the United States from being drawn into the deepest crisis it has ever known.

Who is suffering most acutely the effects of the crisis? The millions upon millions of workers tramping the streets in vain search for work, their hungry, desperate families, the ever-lengthening breadlines are an eloquent reply to the question. Some ten million workers are out of a job. Other millions of workers, insecurely placed in industry, are having their living standards deliberately undermined by a brutal campaign of wage cutting, national in scope and affecting every nidustry. The plan of the capitalist class, driven into a corner by the crisis that has overwhelmed it, is to put the burden of the difficulties upon the shoulders of the working class. It is labor, nourished for years upon the myth of "permanent prosperity", that is to have its standards cut in half, or worse. No other meaning can be read into the "stagger plans", the wage-cutting offensive of the bosses, the failure of the captains of industry and finance and of the government to provide even the slightest measure of social insurance for the unemployed. The plan of the capitalist class is to press down the standards of living of the working class to the level of misery, "Lower the costs of production!" is the cry of the bosses. To lower the costs of production, so as to be able to meet the sharpened competition on an ever-narrowing world market, means to lower the wages, worsen the conditions, remove the hard-won safeguards of the workers.

This involves the continuation and intensifying of the capitalist offensive. The acute and unbearable misery of the ten million unemployed workers is met with a cynical light-heartedness by our ruling class, which is unable to provide the jobless with work and refuses to provide them with relief. The workers still in industry, are strangling in the noose of the wage-cutting drive, while the Wall Street government and its labor lieutenants in the leadership of the trade unions feed them with deceit and empty promises. Every agency of capitalism, which has shown itself incapable of guaranteeing even a minimum living to the mass of the people, is engaged in the assault upon the working class, straining every nerve to prevent the workers from resisting.

But the resistance of the workers, the defense of their conditions, the shifting of the burden of the crisis on to the shoulders of the capitalist class whose system provoked it, is the imperative need of the moment. The campaign of the capitalist class is a national campaign and not confined to any one field. The reduction of wages has its counterpart in the bosses' offensive against the workers on other fields which aim to reduce them to passivity and the docile acceptance of the misery standard. Towards that end, the government has engaged upon a campaign to deport thousands of "foreigners", which means to send out of the country every foreign-born worker who expresses his dicontent actively. With the same aim in mind, a new campaign has been begun against the Communist movement, beginning with the arch-reactionary movement headed by the Fish Committee, down to the arrest and imprisonment of scores of workers in every part of the country for participation in strikes or other militant actions. In the same spirit, the starving unemployed workers who gather to demand relief, are met with the policeman's club, with tear gas, with jail. As a part of the drive, the Fish Committee, representing the darkest forces of American capitalism, has launched a campaign of slander against the Russian workers' republic, seeking by their ridiculous charges of "dumping" to distract the workers' attention from the capitalist criminals at home to whom they owe their distress and to incite them against the Soviet Union.

Confronted by the peril of this assault upon them, the workers of the United States, following in fraternal solidarity their brothers throughout the world, must unite and solidify their ranks to defend their own class interests. The capitalist class is strong not because the workers are weak, but becaue the workers are not united on a militant program of struggle. Such a program of struggle, of resistance to the capitalist offensive, must be the rallying banner for the workers gathered throughout the land to celebrate the International day of the proletariat, May Day.

The Communist League of America (Opposition), in spite of its differences of opinion with the official Communist party, therefore calls upon all workers, regardless of their political or economic opinions; to join in a powerful display of their determination to fight back the assault of the capitalist class, by turning out as one man to the Communist demonstrations on May Day. The Communists alone conduct a militant struggle for the needs and interests of the working class, in spite of the errors made by the official leadership of Communism. The "socialists" of all varieties, on the other hand, are the agents in the working class of the capitalists. In the struggle between the capitalist class and the working class, these "socialists" fight on the side of the former. What MacDonald does in betraying the Indian people and the British workers is what the American "socialists" do on a smaller scale in this country. In the fight between the "socialists" and Communists in the labor movement, in which each represents conflicting class interests, the Left Opposition throughout the world, led by Leon Trotsky, inspired by the ideas of Lenin, stands with the revolutionary working class.

Workers! Join in the May Day demonstrations in every city!

Fight for a program of struggle, to resist the offensive of the capitalist class!

A broad united campaign must be conducted to wrest an elaborate system of social insurance, with special regard for the unemployed, from the hands of the capitalist class and its government.

In order to lessen the intense sufferings of the unemployment workers immediately, the demand must be raised for immediate relief for the unemployed by municipal, state and federal appropriations.

To cut down the mass of unemployment, to adjust the hours of labor so that they are more in harmony with increased productivity and the unemployment crisis, the central slogan should be inscribed on the banner of the labor movement for the six-hour day without reduction in wages.

For the relief of many tens and hundreds of thousands of unemployed, we must demand the extension of long term credits to the Soviet Union which will enable it to place orders for imperatively needed machinery and afford employment to workers in American industry.

Workers! The capitalist class has seized the workers by the throat. The working class must close its ranks, unite its forces, combine the employed and unemployed into a mighty movement against the capitalist offensive.

Demonstrate your determination and strength on May Day! Come to the demonstrations in mass!

Long live the international solidarity of the working class!

Greetings to the First Workers' Republic and the International Communist movement of Lenin and Trotsky!

On with the struggle for the revolutionary liberation of the oppressed and exploited!

NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE
COMMUNIST LEAGUE OF AMERICA
(OPPOSITION)

Miners' Revolt Checked at Muste Convention

The revolt against the Fishwick-Lewis sell-out agreement brought ninety-nine delegates, representing miners in all parts of the country, to the St. Louis convention, April 15. The sentiment of the miners in mass meetings preceding this gathering was for a house-cleaning from top to bottom and for the building of a new union. But these hopes did not materialize.

The bitter attacks upon the rank and file by the reactionary U. M. W. officials, lack of finances, and lack of actual preparatory organization resulted in only one-sixth of the Illinois miners being represented. Those present however were there on behalf of the most live section, a total of sixty-one delegates representing thirty-three locals. Ohio was represented by eight delegates, Kansas by twenty delegates, Indiana by two delegates, and West Virginia by eight.

From the first day of the convention the Muste-Howat type of "progressive" proved to be in the majority and had the control. But before adjournment the bankruptcy of their policy for a solution to the miners' present problem stood out clearly. Further to the Right of this combination were elements unorganized but exercising a certain weight on the policies of the social reformers. To the Left was a minority of honest rank and file delegates who wanted a new union but were pulled into the orbit of the bankrupt Muste policy through the weight of the organized majority faction. The National Miners' Union, directed by the Stalinist party bureaucrats, had issued leaflets in the field urging the miners to stay away from the convention. Nevertheless, it was represented there by Joe Tash. A minority of delegates supporting the policy of the Left Communist Opposition carried the main burden of the fight for a new union.

Alexander Howat made the opening political speech which gave a good deal of evidence on the sell-out agreement but failed to give any indication as to what should be done. In his conclusion he praised the "revolt of the masses in South America who had kicked out their kings and rulers and the Spanish workers who are kicking out their king." In the past, when Howat was still a rebel, he would always remember to point to the workers' achievements in the Russian Revolution; now he failed to mention that. Apparently he does not know that the revolts he mentioned are purely bourgeois revolts. Muste, Daeck, Tippet and Hapgood also proved by their speeches and actions their inability to present a program although Muste and Hapgood by far were the most active in giving lip service to a new union. In this situation their position as a whole became a thoroughly reactionary one.

The most important point on the agenda around which everything else revolved was the question of forming a new union. Every time delegates supporting the Left Communist Opposition raised this issue the Muste followers denounced such talk. One delegate said: "When we had the 'reorganized' union we had the officials and the operators on our side. Now we don't have them and cannot organize a union." He seemed blissfully ignorant of the fact that a union which really represents the interests of the workers can be organized only in opposition to the officials and the operators. Another delegate, remembering the glorious traditions and great sacrifices of the United Mine Workers, wanted a return to these conditions of years ago but did not want a new union right now. Still another delegate said: "We can't go back to Lewis, we won't pay dues to him, but we can't organize a new union." The bankruptcy of the upper strata of the Muste leadership was thoroughly proved by actually proposing exactly the same thing, although using plenty of radical sounding phrases and giving plenty of lip service to deceive the workers into a belief that their course was a different one.

There were in reality only two roads open to the convention. One to go back to the Lewis union, a road which the convention repudiated by rejecting the Lewis-Fishwick compromise and by a call to stop dues payments to both factions. The other, the building of a new miners' union, was also rejected. Hence this convention was left rudderless and the course finally accepted, entirely a negative one, can at best only spell demoralization for the miners. It is true that a new union formed at this moment would have resulted in the most extreme Right wing delegates leaving the convention. But that would just have been a blessing as there are miners all over the country who would replace this deserting element tenfold. It must also be remembered that the convention had delegates from new local unions organized which could have no cause whatever to become a part of the remnants of the Lewis—controlled U. M. of A.

To gauge the level of the convention, a resolution was introduced by Gerry Allard for the release of class war prisoners which struck a unanimous chord. But a resolution, introduced by Joe Angelo, for the defense of the Soviet Union and the granting of long term credits to help build industry in the Workers' Republic resulted in only seventeen votes in favor. Somehow Hapgood happened to both speak and vote for this resolution.

(Continued on page 2)

SMASH the SCOTTSBORO FRAME-UP!

The Negro worker has always been subjected to the most ruthless forms of exploitation by the American boss class. Driven by the double whip of capitalist robbery and violent race hatred, flouted twofold for being a worker and for being a negro, the American negro worker represents the most oppressed section of the working class.

Especially today, when the capitalists are pressed to the wall by their own wild and planless production, by a sweeping world crisis, the increased exploitation and oppression of the various sections of the working class takes on particularly sharp and unbearable forms. In their attempt to sow dissension and conflict in the ranks of the proletariat by pitting the employed against the unemployed, the native against the foreign born workers in order to tame and crush the power of resistance of workers' solidarity, the bosses stress above all, the atack on the negro worker. The negro worker is the first to be fired from his job, the first to have his wages cut, the first to fall under the intensified speed up.

This double and treble exploitation alone does not satiate the capitalist class. They exert every effort to ake this unreard of robbery and oppression secure, by a large system of frame up, slander and lynchings against the colored workers. The case of the nine young workers, framed up by the bosses in Scotsboro without any evidence is a flagrant example of this vicious method of the American ruling class. The frame-up of the nine young negro workers in Scotsboro is part and parcel of the bosses-campaign to divide the ranks of the American working class. It must be unmasked and defeated. Against the attempts of the capitalists to sow dissension into the laboring masses. Against the efforts of the ruling class to separate the negro from the white workers. Against the bosses' campaign of legalized lynching, the entire working class must stand up as one man, in the defense of the nine negro youths, for the defeat of the Scotsboro frame-up. Negro and white workers, unite against capitalist exploitation and oppression!

—G.

EDITORIAL NOTES

THE MINERS' CONVENTION

The miners' convention at St. Louis marked a step in the struggle to break the shackles of the Lewis machine and clear the way for an independent union, despite the glaring defects and weaknesses revealed there. Under the circumstances the presence of a hundred delegates bears testimony to a profound sentiment in the rank and file for a final break with the organization of the betrayers. At the same time the St. Louis convention demonstrated that the rank and file movement is only at the beginning of serious organization and has not yet found its proper leadership. The convention attracted a comparatively small delegation when all the conditions working in its favor are considered, and the decisions arrived at fell short of the minimum requirements of the situation. The pseudo-progressives have stood at the head of the new movement so far. This tells the story of its weakness and its failure. For these people shrink from a real battle with Lewis and the operators and are incapable of conducting it. The insurgent movement will gain momentum and raise the miners to their feet for the conflict with the reactionaries only insofar as it is steeled in irreconcilable hostility to their shields, the "progressives".

The idiotic policy of the official Communist party is responsible for the slow progress of the new revolt and the temporary supremacy of the progressive fainthearts. After the formation of the National Miners' Union in 1928, Foster and Co. devoted their talents to the task of discrediting themselves and Communism. Then they insisted that the miners come to an independent union by the path marked out for them in the blueprint. They did not understand that the masses would find their way to this goal by divergent and, at times, contradictory paths. The boycott of the Fishwick convention in 1930 was a colossal blunder which cleared the way for the great betrayal recently consummated.

Their approach to the new revolt was another exhibition of Centrist bankruptcy. First they denounced the movement and proclaimed a boycott of the convention. Then, at the last moment, Foster came out with a call for the Left wing miners to go to the convention and work there for a united front with the N. M. U. This is precisely what the Opposition said at the start, and that advice—which Foster appropriated when it was too late—was acknowledged by the customary drivel about the "renegades". As a result of the contradictions, mix-ups and delays, the official party and its sympathizers didn't have a single delegate at the convention. The representative of the N. M. U. was given the floor through the pressure of the delegates of the Communist League and the Left wing miners working with them.

The work of comrades Angelo, Allard and others in the convention deserves the highest commendation. Even if their forces were not very large they succeded in setting an example for Left wing militants which will not be lost. They crystallized a firm minority in opposition to the milk-and-water leadership of the progressives. They brought forward the program which the whole movement will be compelled to adopt as the price of survival and development. In our opinion, the statement they issued to the delegates lacked sharpness and militancy in characterizing Howat and his associates. All those who helped Fishwick and Walker helped to betray the miners! Let us say that openly, clearly and loudly so that everybody will understand what happened and how it happened and prevent a repetition of it.

The absence of John Watt from the convention is something which Left wing militants must note with regret. Comrade Watt has suffered under enormous provocation. He has been persecuted and slandered villainously, as we have pointed out on derers who have discredited themselves, and ders who have discredited themselves, and the name of John Watt means a great deal to the miners, especially in Illinois. That is why we think any abstention from the movement on his part, when a great new struggle is unfolding, will be harmful to the movementand doubly harmfull to his own prestige.

THE ROAD TO A NEW UNION

The delegates who spoke in the miners' convention from the standpoint of the Left Opposition demanded a resolute course toward the formation of a new union and a united front with the National Miners' Union and all other independent groups and tendencies, with the goal of union into a single independent organization on a class basis. This is the only way. The formation of the National Miners' Union marked only the first stage in a drawn-out process of separating the mines from the perfidious rule of Lewis and Walker. That separation will take place along the line of a new union, despite temporary set-backs and zig-zags. The miners cannot free their hands for struggle in any other way. After the great betrayal in Illinois they will be compelled to realize this in an increasing degree and they will move toward a new union irresistibly. Those who oppose it will be swept out of the way.

The progressives are close enough to the rank and file to sense this. That is why they did not dare to oppose the idea openly at the St. Louis convention. Their tactics there were to delay and sabotage the movement while giving lip service to the aim. The next wave of the movement, forced up by the unbearable conditions of the miners, will drive them from this position and compel them to go with the new union movement or back to Lewis and Walker. It is very probable that they will split over this question. The Left wing must work to hasten this development and strengthen its own positions in the process.

The leadership of a resolute Left wing is the prerequisite for the success of the new union movement. But this leadership must be the leadership of the masses of workers, not of paper organizations, and it will not be gained in a day or by decree. The first big draft of the future troops of the new independent union are now in the movement represented at St. Louis. The National Miners' Union has only a section of the vanguard, isolated from the masses by a false policy. For that reason the Communists and the Left wing must penetrate this movement and shape its course from within. This idea must be made clear to the Communist workers. Events have confirmed its correctness a dozen times over and are beginning to hammer it into the wooden heads of the leaders.

On the other hand the workers sympathizing with the National Miners' Union represent a great dynamic force, even though false leadership has dispersed and demoralized them for the time. They are our natural allies, and our delegates at St. Louis were absolutely right in demanding a united front with them. The Communist League will work in the future as in the past for the union of all currents tending toward a new union on a militant basis and for the union of all Communist and Left wing workers within the broader movement.

At a time when the sentiment of the workers and the pressure of circumstance is driving the "progressives" to talk of a new union, the editorial in the **Revolutionary Age**—proclaiming the death of the new union movement and calling for a return to the U. M. W. A.—adds a touch of irony to the situation. Muste and Co. are without the corrective of principle but they feel the pressure of the masses. Lovetone and Gitlow lack both. How hopelessly lost are these people who only yesterday expelled the Opposition from the Party for "opportunism"!

THE AFFAIR AT CITY COLLEGE

The recent flare-up in New York City College is an event of interest to the revolutionary labor movement. Ten members of the Social Problems Club—a student organization for the discussion of social questions—were suspended for distributing a leaflet attacking the administration and demanding the reinstatement of Max Weiss, a Communist who had been expelled previously. In their leaflet the students demanded the restoration of "extra-curricular" rights for their organization which would give them the right to discuss questions outside the limits prescribed by the school authorities. This is nothing more than a demand for the ordinary democratic rights of citizenship.

Our sympathies are warmly with the insurgent students and we hope their courage will not fail them. It is gratifying to see that student organizations from a number of other colleges and universities have already declared their solidarity with the suspended students of City College. But the issue has a wider interest. The labor movement has a very good reason to champion the rights of the students in general. And in this case, which involves a struggle to put social questions on the agenda for free discussion without arbitrary professorial supervision, the workers have a particular concern. Workers' organizations, and those under Communist influence in the first rank, ought to come forward in support of this demand.

The case is interesting from another angle. It indicates the revival of a radical trend among the young intellectuals. Such a development is not without importance. It was natural for the first signs of a student awakening to be manifested in such a place as City College. This is a great popular institution supported by public funds. The students from proletarian families, striving to rise out of the working class, meet there the small bourgeois elements slipping down into it. Among students of this type the social question will acquire an increasing importance.

This will arise inevitably from the fact that avenues of escape from the working class are becoming fewer and narrower, even for those who manage in some way to acquire what is called an education. The professions are overcrowded. Only last week the New York Bar Association began to collect facts through a questionnaire with the object of reducing the number of law students. There are 4,700 would-be school teachers on the New York waiting list, with only 500 appointments in prospect during the year. Such department stores as Macy's are employing college graduates exclusively as salesladies, so great and so cheap is the supply. The number of college trained young men and women who can't find a job is mounting by the thousands. Education is a drug on the market.

The more these conditions accumulate and confront the class of intellectuals as a barrier to their individualist aspirations, the more compellingly will social questions engage their attention. It is to the interest of the revolutionary labor movement to encourage and assist every tendency in this direction.—J. P. C.

TROTSKY

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CORRECTION

A regrettable error appeared in our last issue, towards the end of comrade Trotsky's article on "The Successes of Socialism and the Dangers of Adventurism" The fourth paragraph from the end of the article (bottom of page 5, column 1), should read "9. To abandon the false national and international perspective of an economic development which flows inevitably from the theory of socialism in one country", instead of " . . . which flows inevitably from the methodology of Lenin."

Miners' Revolt Checked at Muste Confab

(Continued from page 1)

Joe Tash, who was present on behalf of the National Miners' Union, but not a delegate, obtained the floor partly due to the fairness of chairman Haynes and by motion made by delegates supporting the Left Communist Opposition. He said that the N. M. U. had not sent delegates knowing this convention would not take proper action. A few minutes later he added that he wanted the floor in order to speak to the honest rank and file delegates present. If a Communist knows that a convention will not take proper action but that there are nevertheless honest rank and file delegates present then it becomes so much more a Communist duty to endeavor to send delegates who will know how to act in order to defeat the bankrupt reformers and their wrong policies as well as to win the workers to the Communist ranks. The solution presented by Tash was a propoal that the convention adopt the program of the N. M. U., elect a rank and file committee and form a united front with the N. M. U. This was a complete right-about turn from the former position of boycotting the convention and came very near to the correct policy previously advanced by the Left Communist Opposition and published in the April first issue of the **Militant.**

We might add, if this convention was worthy of being asked to form a united front with the N. M. U. it should not have been boycotted. That merely gives the reformers and fakers full control. This policy of the Stalinist bureaucrats played into the hands of these elements. The failure of the Muste-Howat wing played into the hands of the Lewis-Fishwick operators united front.

As the convention proceded further, showing its inability for decisive action toward the formation of a new union, the question finally was referred to a Policy Committee elected by the convention to report back. This Policy Committee narrowed down the forces and gave the Muste-Howat element full control. Its report to the convention brought forth the following proposals: First, to reject the Lewis-Fishwick compromise. This was accepted unanimously. Secondly, to refuse payment of capita tax to any branch of the U. M. W. of A., and to demand that the charters of "dead locals" be withdrawn in order to eliminate them. This proposal was carried although the latter part is meaningless because to refuse to pay a per capita tax to the U. M. W. of A. means to be out of it.

The third and most vital point was the following: "That the delegates and representatives in the convention create a permanent policy committee of two from each district; these comittees to be selected by the representatives of each respective district, which shall function as a national Policy Committee and that each local union select local committees whose duties will be to keep the district committee informed concerning developments from time to time."

After three days of convention and all that occurred before it, the Muste-Howat reformists could offer only this, which meant offering nothing, an acknowledgment of bankruptcy.

Gerry Allard immediately introduced a **motion for the formation of a new union and** to set up the apparatus for it now. Other delegates supporting the Left Opposition views spoke in detail for the correctness of his motion and for the defeat of the committee's report. One delegate Dan Winnigan of Indiana, and apparently the only general supporter of the party among the delegates, also supported this motion.

Some of the so-called progressives, however, realized that the proposal of the Policy Committee needed a bit of sugar ocating. This was accomplished in a substitute introduced by Hapgood and accepted by the Policy Committee reading as follows: "The purpose of the Policy Committee shall be to continue the agitation in order to keep the workers alive to their own interests so that we will be in a position to build a new national union at the proper time and to help in the organization of the new union in the outlying districts such as West Virginia and Ohio." Hapgood's substitute moton was adopted by 81 votes in favor and seven against, thus defeating the motion of Allard for the formation of a new union. Finally, it was completely proved that the Muste-Howat reformists were unanimous against a new union at this allegedly "inopportune" time.

What is the sum and substance of the results of this convention? They are negative. It decided to reject the Lewis-Fishwick sell-out agreement, it decided to refuse to pay the per capita tax to these fakers. By this time, the latter in combination with the operators have just as much "evidence" against the rank and file workers as if they had built a new union. They will use that wherever possible to blacklist and to expel, and to employ other means of suppression in an endeavor to smash the rank and file movement. The failure of the convention means the failure to build a real instrument for both the defensive and offensive of the coal miners. None of the problems was solved. The policy of the Muste-Howat outfit played into the hands of the enemy. The boycott policy pursued by the National Miners' Union elements under direction of the party bureaucrats despite its turn, which came too late, is largely responsible for making this possible. It helped to secure the control for the Muste-Howat group which could otherwise easily have been dislodged.

The Left Communist Opposition warned in advance against the bankruptcy of these Muste "progressives". The delegation supporting our views emphasized this before the delegates and proposed the correct course. The problems of the miners remain thus far unsolved and the course proposed by the Left Opposition remains as correct now as it was then. New miners' revolts will take place and our forces will continue to fight for a correct course.

—HUGO OEHLER.

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Next Steps in the Needle Trades

By SYLVIA BLEEKER

The four-weeks' strike of the New York dressmakers (February 18—March 18) afford us a lesson from which every Left wing worker should draw the necessary conclusions. As has already been reported, the results of the strike were miserable. The N. T. W. I. U. lost a great deal of prestige among the workers, thereby weakening the whole Left wing. Numerically, the Industrial Union did not lose anything. The number of shops under its control remain about the same, with a slight increase in membership. But the morale of the workers was lowered to a great extent, and spread still further the spirit of pessimism and apathy in the ranks of the membership. Due to the strike, the Left wing was undoubtedly weakened. But it has not yet been crushed.

The objective conditions under which the strike was called must be taken into consideration. We cannot lose sight of the fact that the deep-going crisis, which of the fact that the deep-going crisis, which affected every industry, the needle trades included, the prolonged and extensive periods of slack time, paralyzed the fighting capacity of the workers to a considerable degree. The workers' conditions in the organized shops, under the control of either the Right or the Left wings, declined about thirty-five to fifty percent. To settle down in the shops and make ends meet—this has been the prevailing sentiment among the workers. In such situation it becomes a duty of the leadership to much seriously, deliberately and consciously prepare to strengthen the morale, and the unity of the workers as a prerequisite for the strike.

The conditions won by the dress makers through many bloody fights against the bosses, such as a minimum wage, a nominally established piece rate, shorter hours, have been continually taken away and abolished. The Industrial Union failed to carry on an intensive drive in the shops to resist the lowering or breaking down of the hard-won condition, and to extend the struggle into the unorganized shops and into the shops where the Right wing, with the help of the bosses and the police, gained control, and where the process of elimination of working conditions has been going on with the same rapidity and determination.

The workers felt that during these hard times the Industrial Union allows the same state of affairs to exist in the shops under its control as do in those under Right wing domination. The average worker looked upon both unions in the same way. The endeavor of the present leadership to make up for these shortcomings with an ill-prepared strike, put the Industrial Union into further isolation.

Further, the Union leadership created, at the very outset, a widespread confusion by its vacillation and uncertainty on the question of strike demands. A leadership, to be successful, must have at least a measure of definiteness, so that the workers feel confident in entrusting this leadership with the conduct of its struggles. The Union first proposed the conclusion of economic demands, entirely essential under the circumstances. Then, under the pressure from the Right, the party decided upon giving up the demands for week-work and the shorter working day. Our comrades of the Opposition, fighting in the General Strike Committe, and in the Delegates Council, felt that the very foundation and the backbone of the strike had been removed. To strike for recognition of the union without conditions meant the virtual disregard of the unorganized workers and also of those organized in the Right wing union.

The demand for shorter hours and week work would at least have proved to the workers that the N. T. W. I. U. is championing better conditions and is ready to lead the workers in struggle. The strike would then have become a fight of the workers for better conditions, and the forerunner of the coming struggles under the leadership of the Left wing. Once these demands were abandoned, the central point of the strike removed, there was no valid reason for a general strike. The leadership could not and did not expect a response. They gambled with the life of the N. T. W. I. U. That is why our comrades proposed that if the party heads insisted upon eliminating the economic demands, it would be better to convert the movement into an intensive organization campaign in preparation for a really broad strike.

While the forces of the Union in the shops were declining, no new adherents were gained from the workers in the Right wing union. Instead of building a Left wing in the I. L. G. W. U., the leadership sang in chorus: It's a company union; dont' bother with it; kep away from it. For more than a year, the Left Opposition hammered away at the Left wing generally, and specifically at the Communist party members in the needle trades, on the necessity to lead the struggle of the workers who had been corralled again by the Right wing unions and not to leave them a prey to the bosses' agents, the Schlesingers, the Kaufmans, the Hillmans and others.

Subsequent events have borne out this policy to T. An organized and developed opposition in the Right wing union, would afford moral and organizational help for every struggle of the N. T. W. I. U. Through such an opposition we would have been able to carry on a united front policy with the workers in the old union. Not a fake "rank and file united front committee" to snatch a few workers away from the great majority, but a genuine united front to carry on a fight against the bosses on the basis of specific demands, for instance: a shorter working day, the abolition of piece work, improved conditions, etc.

The Industrial Union, which is a minority section, must follow the path of united front action. The hesitation and delay of the leadership (party and T. U. U. L.) to adopt this course, contributed largely to the present weakened condition of the N. T. W. I. U. The fundamentally erroneous policy of: Hands off the "company unions"!, a medicine given to the workers in big doses at very short intervals, is coming back to the same leadership at present. The workers are confused. Only yesterday, the workers were told to keep away from the "social fascist company union"; without any explanation, they are told today by the zig-zagging leaders, that the policy must be to work within these organizations. Naturally, there is skepticism and further confusion. The proper way to make the workers understand the significance of the new policy is to admit to them that the "company union" theory was wrong from the beginning, and to inaugurate a thoroughgoing discussion on how to carry on the building of an opposition in the unions controlled by the reactionaries.

What is the situation now? The present situation is by no means hopeless, even though the wrong policies have driven the Union into isolation and made the struggle more involved. The existing unions, on a craft basis, have not solved the problems of the workers. The problem of building an Industrial Union embracing all needle trades workers is still on the order of the day. Whether the present unions will constitute the foundation for one industrial union or whether it will be built through the vast majority of the unorganized through united front struggles cannot be decided in advance. But our course must be to build one industrial union, the tactics to be determined by prevailing conditions. To achieve this aim, we must not relax for one moment, nor must we capitulate before the hardships. The tendency of the Right wing has always been to capitulate before the fakers, expressed today by the Lovestone group proposal to liquidate the Industrial Union. This proposal aims at the liquidation of the organized Left wing, and involves a submission to the Right wing bureaucrats or their "Left" assistants. Such a way out of the situation must be repudiated.

The Left wing and Communist workers should exert all pressure to eliminate such a capitulationist ideology. Our Union has suffered enough from such defeatism in the past.

The possibilities for building the new union are at hand. There are thousands upon thousands—the majority in the industry—who are unorganized. The knit goods trade, for example, is an outstanding instance. There we can begin our organizational work with the help of those cloakmakers who went through a training in the struggle and are even now, after all the defeats, still sympathetic to the cause of the Left wing. They did not exchange the banner of the Left wing for that of reformism. This industry now comprises from 30,000 to 35,000 unorganized workers. The same is true of other branches even though there has been some organization. The dress, the fur, the raincoat, the millinery, the white goods, etc., etc., are not even half controlled by the Right wing. Here is our field for work, of course, if we actually do the work and do not wait for miracles.

The organization work will have to be carried on in a planful and constructive way. The tactics used up to now must be discarded, and instead a broad policy of establishing contacts with the shops, of preparatory work, of single strikes, should be adopted. The conditions of the workers have almost reached rock bottom. The same standards prevail in both union and open shops. This creates a condition where the future struggle of the workers, in both the Left and Right unions and in the open shops, will be for the same improvements. To be more specific, all the enumerated groups will have to make the same demands in order to regain the lost standards and further to improve conditions.

We know now, without a shadow of a doubt, that the reactionary officials will not promote such struggles. On the contrary, they will do all in their power to divert the militancy of the workers. Therefore, it remains for the Left wing to help the workers in the old unions to organize and fight side by side with the other militants for their own interests. From this struggle, new oppositions will emerge, with whom the N. T. W. I. U. will have to carry on fights for improvement on the basis of united fronts. Not such united fronts as Potash is now proposing with the discredited labor skate Sorkin (of the Furriers). It seems that the Potashes have learned nothing from the past betrayals. Again we hear the voice of the Lovestone ideology in the party: United fronts with "progressive" cliques. Lovestone unites with Levy and Potash proposes that the N. T. W. I. U. unite with Sorkin. A schooling in Lovestoneism seems to be hard to live down. We want united front with the rebellious workers in the ranks of the Right wing unions. The Left Opposition will fight with the help of the Left wing workers against such "united fronts" as are proposed by the Lovestone Right wing or the Stalinist Potashes.

Steering clear of corrupting influences in our own ranks, the Left wing can win its struggle to build one powerful industrial union of the needle trades workers if it is able to adopt a course that will lead it with sureness in the right direction.

The Daily Worker Explains Some Differences

"A worker in South Bend, Washington," the **Daily Worker** (3-17-1931) informs its readers, "writes: What is the difference between a Lovestoneite and a Musteite? I have been reading the **Daily Worker** for a year now, but I have never seen this question answered."

The perplexity of the South Bend worker is easily to be understood and sympathized with. After reading the **Daily Worker** for a year, he has not been able to find an explanation of the difference between the Right wing of the Communist movement and the Left wing of reformism. That the oracle who replies to him in the "Questions and Answers" column tacitly accepts the implication of the worker's question is already an illuminating revelation of the confusion and ignorance that Stalinism sows in every important political question? How could it be otherwise? To expect clarityo n such problems from these professional incompetents is to look for milk from a bull. Is it not the beginning and end of all their wisdom that there is **no difference** between anybody and everybody who opposes the "line" that prevails for the moment, regardless of the nature of the opposition? Does not "every worker know" that Hoover, Fish, Borah, Green, Thomas., Hillquit, Muste, Lovestone and Trotsky are one and the same person, masquerading as many only with the mischievous purpose of confounding philosophers of the "third period"? It would appear that questions settled so long ago by the **Daily Worker** no longer required the elaborate reply which it devotes to the South Bend worker, especially when the reply consists principally of the usual superficial journalistic denunciation of Lovestone and Co., which are repeated all the more violently the more the author seeks to make his readers forget that only yesterday the Stalinists were so amorously celebrating with Lovestone the their joint pogroms against the expelled Left Opposition. And these "settled questions" would really require no reply but for two reasons: the fact that they are not yet "settled", and secondly, the need felt by Stalinism, in order to hold its own head above water, to promote the campaign of slander and falsehood against the Left Opposition. That is why, in the midst of his reply, the anonymous writer in the **Daily Worker** presents his readers with the following information:

"Lovestone stopped all his 'criticism' of the Musteites and the socalled 'Lefts' in the socialist party long ago. Nor was Lovestone alone in this. The Trotskyites who considered themselves the 'Communist leaven (in) the new progressive movement' made overtures to the Lovestoneites on the basis of work within the Muste movement and against the Communist party.

"In the summer of 1930 conversations were held between Cannon, leader of the Trotskyites, and Lovestone. The purpose of these parleys was to work out a common base of struggle against the Communist party and the Communist International. While they had to keep this alliance more or less secret from their followers, the spirit of 'cooperation' on the basis of the Muste program became so prevalent in the Trotskyite group that Cannon, on pressure from Shachtman, et al, was forced to castigate his followers who, like Bart Miller of the Lovestone group, took the cue of their leader without its diplomatic trimmings and went too openly into the Muste camp. The flesh and blood alliance of the Trotskyites with the Muste group did nat mature. They could not travel quite so fast as the Lovestone group had done, but their hearts were set on the distant green fields of the Musteite 'mass movement'. They had an international anchor."

Were it not for certain unintended avowals contained in these sentences, it would hardly be worth refuting the fantastic fabrications out of which they are composed. But the Communist movement is living through a period where lying is invested with the cloak of official authority and backed by an unprecedented apparatus for "distribution".

Falsehood No. 1 is a distorted quotation from an old Militant in which we said that "the Communists must establish contact with the workers in the ranks and combine with them for a common struggle. Without the Communist leaven the new progressive movement will have no backbone . . . Without asking anybody's permission the Communists must become a part of it, influence it from within, push it to the Left and help to shape it into an effective fighting force. Ruthless criticism of the Muste leadership is an indispensable part of this work for the future of the movement" (9-15-1929). We have not changed our opinion on this point. The party leaders, who change their opinions every week, will yet be compelled to accept our point of view—without understanding it, it is true, and without being able to execute the policy as Bolsheviks.

Falsehood No. 3 is the alleged "summer of 1930 conversations" between Cannon and Lovestone to negotiate "a common base of struggle" against the Comintern. Why in 1930? Did not the **Daily Worker** inform us for a year prior to that date that "the Trotskyites and Lovestoneites have concluded a united front of renegacy against the party"? If it was "concluded" early in 1929, why the 1930 conversations? Are we to draw the daring conclusion that the **Worker** was lying about the "united front" at least between the summer of 1929 and the summer of 1930? Rash as such a deduction may appear, we can come to no other! And while conversations are being discussed, will the **Daily Worker** be kind enough to inquire of comrade Bittelman about some "conversations" that a certain representative of the Comintern had—not in 1930, but in the late winter of 1931—with the "Right wing in Canada about a common base of struggle"? Such a report would make more interesting, more valuable and more truthful reading. . . .

Assorted falsehoods: Just where did the "spirit of cooperation on the basis of the Muste program" become prevalent in our group, and require "Cannon, on pressure of Shachtman, et al [who is this 'et al'?] to castigate his followers"? Which of the Oppositionists "went too openly into the Muste camp", or into that camp at all? Hasn't the **Worker** writer confused us here with his yesterday's comrade-in-arms in the struggle against Trotskyism, Bert Miller, who is now fighting "Trotskyism" on the other side of the barricades, as many of his similars will do tomorrow? . . . .

In an unguarded moment, the **Worker** makes a damaging confession: We did not go over to Muste, that is, to the Left wing of social democracy, because we "had an international anchor". If this has any sense at all, it means that our association with the Russian and International Left Opposition "is keeping us" in Communist waters. But, dear Messrs. Browder and Co., it is precisely because we proclaimed our solidarity with the Russian Opposition, because we "tied ourselves to the international anchor", that you expelled us on charge of being "counter-revolutionists"!

Well, there's nothing that can be done about it. A feeling of hopelessness overcomes one when confronted with these gentlemen of the Stalinist school. It is politically impossible to have them stop lying—they would first have to stop living politically. It is even impossible to have them tell one lie and stick to it. But then, that is the curse of the liar's life: he can never remember accurately the lie he told yesterday, and what is even more distressing, he is in the Stalinist concentration camps with the competition of his fellow-toilers who are constantly trying to "catch up with and ourstrip" him in their products. Against such convict labor we raise our voice in protest. In vain. The Browders really enjoy their abominable labors. -S.

THE CASE OF RIAZANOV

By LEON TROTSKY

At the moment we write these lines, we know nothing about the expulsion from the party of Riazanov except what is communicated by the official telegrams of the T. A. A. S. agency. Riazanov is expelled from the party not for any differences with the socalled general line, but for "treason" to the party. Riazanov is accused—no more and no less—of having conspired with the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionists allied with the conspirators of the industrial bourgeoisie. This is the version of the official communication. What does not seem clear at first sight is that for Riazanov the affair is limited to his exclusion from the party. Why has he not been arrested and arraigned before the Supreme Tribunal for conspiracy against the dictatorship of the proletariat. Such a question must pose itself before every man who reflects, even for anybody who does not know the persons in question. The latest communications say that Riazanov is named in the indictment by Krylenko. As an accused of tomorrow?

The Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionists represent parties which seek the re-establishment of capitalism. The Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionists are distinguished from other parties of capitalist restoration by the fact that they hope to give the bourgeois régime in Russia "democratic" forms. There are very strong currents in these parties which consider that any régime in Russia, regardless of its political form, would be more progressive than the Bolshevik régime. The position of the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionists is counter-revolutionary in the most precise and objective sense of the word, that is, in the class sense. This position cannot but lead to attempts to utilize the discontent of the masses for a social uprising. The activity of the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionists is nothing but the preparation for such an uprising. Are blocs of the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionists with the industrial bourgeoisie excluded? Not at all. The policy of the social democracy throughout the world is based upon the idea of a coalition with the bourgeoisie against the "reaction" and the revolutionary proletariat. The policy of the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionists in 1917 was entirely based upon the principle of the coalition with the liberal bourgeoisie, republican as well as monarchical. The parties which consider that there is no way out for Russia other than the return to the bourgeois régime cannot but make a bloc with the bourgeoisie. The latter cannot refuse aid, including financial aid, to its democratic auxiliaries. Within these limits everything is clear, for it flows from the very nature of things. But how could comrade Riazanov happen to be among the participants in the Menshevik conspiracy? Here we are confronted by an obvious enigma.

THE MARXIST RIAZANOV A MENSHEVIK?

When Syrzov was accused of "double dealing", every conscious worker had to ask himself: How could an old Bolshevik who, not so long ago, was put by the Central Committee into the post of chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, suddenly become the illegal defender of opinions which he refuted and condemned officially? From this fact, one could only establish the extreme duplicity of the Stalinist régime, in which the real opinions of the members of the government are determined by the intermediary of the G. P. U.

But in the Syrzov affair, it was only a matter of conflicts between the Centrists and the Right wing of the party, and nothing more. The Riazanov "affair" is incomparably more significant and more striking. All of Riazanov's activity was manifested in the realm of ideas, of books, of publications, and already by that alone, it was under the constant control of hundreds of thousands of readers throughout the world. Finally, and this is the most important thing, Riazanov is accused not of sympathy for the deviation of the Rights in the party, but of participation in the counter-revolutionary conspiracy.

That numerous members of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, theoreticians and practicians of the general line, are Mensheviks without knowing it: that numerous former Mensheviks, who had changed names but not their essence, successfully occupy the most responsible posts (People's Commissars, ambassadors, etc.): finally, that within the framework of the C. P. S. U., no mean place is occupied, by the side of the Bessedovskys, the Agabekovs and other corrupted and demoralized elements, by direct agents of the Mensheviks —on that score we have no doubts at all. The Stalinist régime is the culture of all sorts of microbes of decomposition in the party. But the Riazanov "affair" cannot be set into this framework. Riazanov is not an upstart, an adventurist, a Bessedovsky or any sort of agent of the Mensheviks. Riazanov's line of development can be retraced year by year, in accordance with facts and documents, articles and books. In the person of Riazanov we have a man who for more than forty years has participated in the revolutionary movement: and every stage of his activity has in one way or another entered into the history of the proletarian party. Riazanov had serious differences with the party at various times, including the time of Lenin, or rather, **especially** in the time of Lenin, when Riazanov participated actively in the daily policy of the party. In one of his speeches, Lenin spoke directly of the **strong** sides of Riazanov and of his **weak** sides. Lenin did not see a politician in Riazanov. Speaking of his strong sides, Lenin had in mind his idealism, his deep devotion to the Marxian doctrine, his exceptional erudition, his honesty in principle, his intransigeance in the defense of the heritage of Marx and Engels. That is precisely why the party put Riazanov at the head of the Marx-Engels Institute which he himself had created. The work of Riazanov had an international importance, not only of a historico-scientific, but also a revolutionary and political character. Marxism is inconceivable without the acceptance of the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat. Menshevism is the bourgeois democratic refutation of this dictatorship. In defending Marxism against revisionism, Riazanov, by all of his activity, conducted a struggle against the social democracy and consequently against the Russian Mensheviks. How then is Riazanov's position in principle to be reconciled with his participation in the Menshevik conspiracy? To this question there is no reply. And we think that there cannot be such a reply. We do not doubt for an instant that Riazanov did not participate in any conspiracy. But in that case, where does the accusation come from? If it is invented, then by whom and with what object?

THE MENSHEVIK "COLLABORATORS" AND THE MARX-ENGELS INSTITUTE

To this, we can only give hypothetical explanations, based, nevertheless, upon a sufficiently sure acquaintance with the people and the circumstances. We will assist ourselves, moreover, with political logic and revolutionary psychology. Neither the one nor the other can be abolished by the telegrams of T. A. S. S.

Comrade Riazanov directed a vast scientific institution. He required a numerous qualified personnel, of collaborators, of people initiated in Marxism, the history of the revolutionary movement, the problems of the class struggle, and those who knew foreign languages. Bolsheviks having the same qualities occupy, almost without exception, responsible administrative posts and are not available for a scientific institution. On the other hand, among the Mensheviks there are numerous demobilized politicians who have retired from the struggle or who, at least, feign to have retired. In the domain of historical research, of commentary, of annotation, of translation, of important correction, etc., comrade Riazanov based himself to a certain point upon this species of Menshevik in retreat. In the Institute, they played about the same rôle that the bourgeois engineers play in the State Planning Commission and the other economic organs. A Communist who directs any institution, as a general rule defends "his" specialists, sometimes even those who lead him around by the nose. The most illuminating example of it is the former chairman of the State Planning Commission, the member of the Central Committee, Krzhyhanovsky, who for many years, foaming at the mouth, defended against the Opposition the minimal programs and plans of his subordinates—saboteurs. The director of the Marx-Engels Institute could not but assume the defense of his Menshevik collaborators when they were threatened with arrest and deportation. This rôle of defender, not always crowned with success, has not been practised by Riazanov since yesterday. Everybody, beginning with Lenin, knew it; some joked about it, understanding perfectly the "administrative" interests that guided Riazanov.

There is no doubt that certain Menshevik collaborators, perhaps the majority used the Institute to cover up their conspirative work concealment of archives and documents: correspondence, contact with abroad, etc.) One can imagine that Riazanov was not always sufficiently attentive to the admonitions coming from the party, and showed an excessive benevolence towards his perfidious collaborators. But we think that this is the extreme limit of the accusation that might be addressed to comrade Riazanov. The books edited by Riazanov are before the eyes of everybody: there is neither Menshevism nor sabotage in them, as in the economic plans of Stalin-Krzhyzhanovsky.

But if one accepts the fact that Riazanov's mistake does not exceed credulous protection of the Menshevik-specialists, where then does the accusation of treason come from? We know, from a recent experience, that the Stalinist G. P. U. is capable of casting into the ranks of irreproachable revolutionists an officer of Wrangel. Menzhinsky and Yagoda would not hesitate for a moment to attribute any crime whatsoever to Riazanov as soon as they were ordered to do it. But who ordered it? Who would have gained by that? Who sought this international scandal around the name of Riazanov?

It is precisely on this that we can advance explanations that flow with exceptional force from all the circumstances. In recent years, Riazanov, as is said, has withdrawn from active politics. In this sense he has shared the fate of many old members of the party who, despair in their hearts, have quite the internal life of the party and have shut themselves up in economic or cultural work. It is only this resignation that has permitted Riazanov to insure his Institute against devastation in the whole post-Leninist period. But in the last year it became impossible to maintain oneself in this position. The life of the party, especially since the Sixteenth Congress, has been converted into a continual examination into loyalty to the chief, the one and only. In every nucleus, there are now agents fresh from the plebiscite who, on every occasion, interrogate the hesitant and the irresolute: do they regard Stalin as an infallable chief, as a great theoretician, as a classic of Marxism? Are they ready on the New Year to swear fidelity to the chief of the party—to Stalin? The less the party shows itself capable of controlling itself by an ideological struggle, the more the bureaucracy is forced to control the party with the aid of agents provocateurs.

THE PLEBISCITARY REGIME . . . AND ITS VICTIMS

For many years Riazanov was able to hold his tongue very prudently—too prudently—on a whole series of burning questions. But Riazanov was organically incapable of cowardice, of platitudes; all ostentatious display of the sentiment of fidelity was repugnant to him. One can imagine that in the meetings of the nucleus of the Institute, he often flew into a passion against the debauched youngsters of that innumerable order of young professors who usually understand very little of Marxism but for that excel in falsehood and informing. This sort of internal clique, no doubt, for a long time had its candidate for the post of director of the Institute and, what is still more important, its relations in the G. P. U. and the Secretariat of the Central Committee. Had Riazanov alluded somewhere, even if only in a few words, to the fact that Marx and Engels were only forerunners of Stalin, then all the stratagems of the debauched youngsters would collapse and no Krylenko would dare to make a complaint against Riazanov for his benevolence towards the Menshevik translators. But Riazanov did not accept this. As for the general secretariat, it was unable to go any further in concessions.

After having acquired the power of the apparatus, Stalin feels himself internally weaker than ever. He knows himself too well and that is why he fears his own situation. He needs a daily confirmation of his rôle of dictator. The plebiscitary régime is pitiless; it does not reconcile itself with doubt, it always demands new enthusiastic acknowledgments. That is how Riazanov's turn came. If Bucharin and Rykov feel victims of their "platform" which, it is true, they have renounced two or three times, Riazanov fell victim . . . of his personal honesty. The old revolutionist said to himself: "To serve while holding one's tongue, with teeth gritted—good; to be an enthusiastic lackey—impossible." That is why Riazanov fell under the justice of the party of the Yaroslavskys. Then Yagoda furnished the elements of the accusation. In conclusion, Riazanov was declared a traitor to the party and an agent of the counter-revolution.

In the C. P. S. U. and in the Western sections of the Comintern, many are the Communists who observe with consternation the work of the Stalinist bureaucracy, but justify their passivity, saying: "What can be done? One must hold his tongue so as not to convulse the foundations of the dictatorship." This possibilism is not only poltroonish but more than that, it is blind. From the foundation of the dictatorship, the apparatus of the official party is being converted more and more into an instrument for its decomposition. This process cannot be arrested with silence. Internal explosions are becoming more and more frequent and each time assume ever more threatening forms. The struggle against the Stalinist régime is a struggle for the Marxian foundations of a proletarian policy. This foundation cannot be won without party democracy. The plebiscitary régime of Stalin is not durable by its very nature. So that it shall not be liquidated by the class enemies it is indispensable to liquidate it by the efforts of the advanced elements of the Communist International. This is the lesson of the Riazanov "affair"!

Prinkipo, March 8, 1931.

Behind the Scenes in the Russian Party

MOSCOW.—

These recent weeks the newspapers have devoted a lot of space to greetings addressed to Molotov. In this respect, everything seems to be in order. Everything has the air of being as it should be, and the rumors about the quarrel between the "first secretary" and the "second" are apparently denied. But better informed people and a number of objective symptoms, slight though they are, show that things are otherwise. The post of chairman of the Council of Commissars, since Rikov occupied it for two years under attack, has lost all political importance, and from this point of view the designation of Molotov is one of the most honorable forms of administrative exile. But Molotov, it is said, has been stubborn for a long time. He had a fit of blues, did not show himself; that is, he made use of the Stalinist policy towards Lenin. The "greetings" have as their object to console Molotov and to reconcile him to his fate. For, it seems, Stalin does fear a new conflict after all: even without that, the number of people who consider that his leadership is costing the party too dear, is already pretty high. And on the other hand, Molotov is also unable to pull the cord any tighter, considering that Stalin is well enough armed against him: in private conversations Stalin throws all the responsibility for the "third period" upon Molotov and tells how foreign delegates have come and begged him: "Free us from the 'third period' and . . . from Molotov." It is likely that all this will rise to the surface at the next operation.

I inform you belatedly on some details about the Syrzov-Lominadze faction. The faction was especially strong in Caucasia, where Lominadze proceded in the following manner. He placed his people everywhere, giving them instructions to defend the general line throughout and to elect Stalinists by half to the leading organs in order in this way to divert suspicion. The aim in mind with this procedure was the formation of the greatest possible number of factional nuclei to spring up on the next all Russian conference or congress, as a full delegation, and to lay down their cards.

The Syrzov faction was betrayed by one of its own partisans, Reznick. The fact that this name is mentioned in the papers as one of the "double-dealers" was only intended to detract attention. Thanks to Reznick's provocation, the Political Bureau was informed of every one of Syrzov's steps. While Syrzov was participating in a factional deliberation at Nussinov's home, the Political Bureau was hastily gathered together and Syrzov was called there directly from Nussinov's home. At first, Syrzov flatly denied the existence of the factional deliberation and declared that the comrades were quite simply occupied with the problem of developing the breeding of cattle. That is the explanation of the dull jokes by Kaganovitch on the breeding of cattle, cows, etc., in the press. But after it was explained in the Political Bureau that everything was known—and documents were presented as proof—Syrzov and Lominadze confessed everything, adding that they themselves could not understand how they were able at this point to deny the existence of the faction. At the Central Control Commission, Syrzov, at the outset, had a provoking attitude. He is the one who produced the following charcterization of Stalin: "A stupid man who is leading the country to ruin." He is also the one

(Continued on page 5)

The Theory of Stalinism and the Revolution in Spain

By MAX SHACHTMAN

One of the surest marks of the philistine in the revolutionary movement is his contempt for the theories which underlie it. No more dangerous philistine inside the movement can be imagined than the one who conceals this contempt under the thin cover of a vulgar "practicalism". He who protests, "Yes, yes, theory may be all right, but we must be practical," will always lead the workers into the opportunist morass. As for the Marxist, to whom the word "practise" has an infinitely more serious connotation, he is guided by Lenin's terse axiom: Without revolutionary theory—no revolutionary practise.

One of the most highly perfected types of superficial "practical people" is Stalin. In his image, there has been created a whole school which permeates and poisons the life and thought of the official Communist movement today. It is no accident that Stalin called the invaluable theoretical discussion which shaped Bolshevism in its struggle against Menshevism and other petty bourgeois tendencies, "a storm in a water glass" (1911). Again, it is characteristic of Stalin and his school that, in the struggle against the Bolshevik-Leninists (Opposition) within the party, they constantly derided the latter as "emigrés" (with special reference to Trotsky, of course, but unwittingly to Lenin as well!), in contrast to those "practical people" who, like Stalin, remained in Russia between the first two revolutions and conducted the work at home while the others "theorized" abroad. This attitude is in the very nature of tendency which Stalin represents—Centrism, which, having no distinct theoretical foundation of its own, finds a substitute for it in the scraps it borrows from the stark opportunism of the Right wing and the Marxian principles of the Left wing, and fuses into a formless, eclectic mass.

The National-Socialist Conception

The eclecticism of the Stalinist faction the world over is most clearly expressed in the combination of the theory of socialism in one country and the mechanical, lifeless, bureaucratic internationalism which it has foisted upon all the parties of the Comintern. That Centrism holds so tenaciously to the "theory" of national socialism does not at all refute our contention that it is thoroughly imbued with a profound scorn for Marxian theory. The nationalist conception of Stalin-Bucharin arose and achieved its dominant position in the Communist movement only because of the retardation of the world revolution, because a period of reaction set it after the proletarian defeats in 1923-1924, as a reaction against the revolutionary perspectives which flowed from a Marxian evaluation of our epoch.

For some seven years now, the Left Opposition has conducted an intransigent struggle against this conception. Nobody initiated into the elements of Marxism has been able to defend it. That is why the official "defense" of the Stalinist version of national socialism begins and ends, in the Communist party, with the summary organizational suppression of those who oppose it. Unofficially, it is confidentially "defended" in this way: "It is true that as a 'theory' it does not hold water from a Marxian point of view; but it nevertheless gives the Russian working class a practical perspective towards which to strive."

To this disgraceful cynicism, which pretends to believe that at its worst the idea can do no particular harm, the Opposition has replied: Ideas do not live in the clouds. They are shaped by conditions and events. But in turn, they help to shape events. The idea that a classless socialist society can be established within the boundaries of one country alone (and in agricultural Russia at that) providing only that it is guaranteed against military intervention has already had far-reaching historical consequences of disastrous dimensions. From this idea flowed not only our ruinous alliance with such "anti-interventionists" as Purcell and Co., and with such "fighters against imperialism" as Chiang Kai-Shek, but, in the long run, something even more pernicious. The international Communist movement is being transformed from a militant instrument of working class offensive into a far-flung system of frontier guards for the U. S. S. R., from the organization of the world revolution into a pacifist defense organization.

The recent years of revolutionary history have unfortunately given more than one sorry instance of this humiliating conversion. Today, the official attitude of the Stalinist bureaucracy towards the revolutionary events n Spain contribute further proof of the reactionary effects of the theory of socialism in one country.

Wherein lies the immense revolutionary significance of the events in Spain? In a few words it is this: Under the surface of the victory of the republicans over the monarchists lie the threat to both of them of the permanent revolution, that is, of the revolutionary proletariat coming to power at the head of the popular masses. Given a resolute Communist party in Spain, imbued with the audacity that inspired Lenin, Trotsky and the Russian Bolsheviks in 1917, the Spanish Kerenskys and Tchernovs can be turned out and the revolutionary Soviet régime established in their place. A successful proletarian revolt in Spain, which is an "absurdity" only to such people as regarded a Bolshevik victory absurd in the early part of 1917, would not only be of incalculable assistance to the Soviet Union, but would give a mighty impulsion to the international proletarian revolution, primarily in Europe. From this standpoint, the events in Spain must arouse the greatest enthusiasm among revolutionists, who look upon today not only as the continuation of yesterday but as the beginning of tomorrow.

It is true that the proletarian tomorrow has been retarded in Spain by the bureaucratic régime, the ignorance and downright neglect of Stalinism. The Molotovs, who discover revolutionary situations where there are none, who declared almost two years ago that it was France which was entering "with both feet into an era of great revolutionary events", are naturally taken completely unawares by revolutionary events which break out in reality, and not merely in bureaucratic fantasy. The same Molotovs, Kussinens, Manuilskys, and other shadows of Stalin, conduct themselves with such brilliant strategical wisdom and a display of the qualities of leadership, that when a revolutionary situation actually arises, they either tie the Communist party to the chariot of the enemy (to Chiang Kai-Shek in China, to Purcell in England, to Pilsudsky in Poland), or else carry on in such a manner that the offical Communist party is totally unprepared to play any decisive rôle in the situation (July 1927 events in Vienna, the present day in Spain). A revolutionary situation of first magnitude in Spain—and an insignificant Communist party! That is how Stalinism rewards the Communist International for its long toleration of Centrist rule. But even the barriers set up by Stalinism are not insurmountable. In the heat of revolutionary struggle, a Communist party can be forged and tempered with unusual rapidity.

To what extent, in what sense will the ruling bureaucracy contribute towards this end? It has already given a provisional reply to this question. In it is expressed in the crassest manner the reactionary significance of the theory of socialism in one country. The "practical people" now appear on the scene as onlookers from afar who are anxious and disturbed by the revolutionary events in Spain because they may upset the plans laid out for a nationally contented socialist utopia! Many have undoubtedly already observed how the official Communist press here (the **Daily Worker**) has paid less attention to the Spanish events than it has to a branch meeting of the alleged Friends of the Soviet Union. Now let us see how the main organs of Stalin in the Sovet Union evaluate Spain today. We will be more than amply and instructively repaid by a couple of lengthy quotations.

Stalin on Spain

The first reliable dispatch from Moscow by Walter Duranty (**New York Times**, 4-17-1931) gives the following illuminating information:

"The first Soviet comment on the events in Spain appears in the leading editorial in the newspaper **Pravda** today, but the organ of the Russian Communist Party seems none too jubilant over the prospects of the revolutionary struggle which it clearly expects will follow Alfonso's downfall. . . .

"The unexpectedly pessimistic tone of **Pravda**, which more than **Izvestia** is the 'Kremlin's mouthpiece', perhaps is to be explained by Soviet anxiety lest the events in Spain disturb European peace during the present critical period of the five year plan.

"Rightly or wrongly, it is believed here that the peace of Europe hangs literally on a thread, that the accumulation of armaments and national hatreds are much greater than before the war and make the present situation no less dangerous than in the Spring of 1914, and that Spanish fireworks might easily provoke a general conflagration."

In other words, the interests of socialist construction in the Soviet Union are directly counterposed to the interests of the world revolution, and the attitude which welcomes the disturbance of the capitalist equilibrium replaced by a timid pacifist fear of the social convulsions whch accompany the proletarian struggle for power. This astounding standpoint is revealed in an even brighter light by the Duranty dispatch of the following day (4-18-1931):

"The Soviet attitude toward the events in Spain is extraordinarily interesting and in a sense highly revealing. It had long been accepted here—as, for that matter, by the rest of the world—that the position of the Spanish monarchy was precarious.

"Too such connoisseurs in revolutionary science as the Bolsheviki it was inevitable that each day's delay in the proclamation of a republic—which logically should have occurred six months ago—must superheat the revolutionary forces to an extent that would make the final explosion more dangerous.

"Paradoxically enough, it appears that Moscow is not overdelighted by this circumstance—in fact it may almost be said that if the Spanish revolution 'swings Left', as Moscow now expects, Moscow will be more embarrassed than pleased. One would naturally have expected **Pravda** to salute the chance of a Spanish proletariat's struggle for power with loud and glowing enthusiasm and to appeal to the Spanish people to support and encourage their Spanish comrades.

"Instead of that, **Pravda's** first reaction was a dismal editorial, stale as a damp squib. For, first, the Soviet Union is excessively and perhaps unduly nervous about a war danger and 'views with alarm' any event anywhere that may upset the European status quo [so!]. The Soviet anxiety may be exaggerated, but it is quite natural in view of the fact that this country is in the position of a rider crossing a dangerous ford, where a sudden cloudburst might sweep him and his steed away.

"Secondly, the Kremlin's policy today stands much more on the success of socialist construction in Russia than upon world revolution. The Bolsheviki do not much like to admit it, but it is a fact as a consequence of the Kremlin's previous conflict with Leon Trotsky, who declared the existence of a genuine socialist state in a capitalist world impossible.

"The Kremlin exiled Trotsky and set out to prove that he was wrong, which led to the concentration of Soviet effort upon the economic development embodied in the five-year plan. These two reasons help to explain **Pravda's** embarrassment."

A clearer presentation of the case could hardly be requested. The difference between the conceptions of socialism in one country and of revolutionary internationalism stands reevaled not only in theory but also in practise. Tested in the retort of the Spanish events, it gives the following obvious result: To Stalinism, the first conception expresses itself concretely in setting up socialist progress in one country **against** revolutionary progress in others, in a pacifist degeneration of Communism; to the Marxian wing of the movement (the Left Opposition), the strengthening of the socialist sector in the country where the proletariat has seized power is not only essential "in itself", but more than that, it is **inseparable** from the advance of the revolution in other countries and is **directly** dependent upon it.

An Objection Answered

There only remains to answer in advance—and it is not difficult to do it—the "objection" which it is also not difficult to foresee. Unable to refute the argument on its own merits, our Centrists will take refuge behind the declaration that the quotations made above are taken from Duranty, a bourgeois correspondent, in the **New York Times**, a bourgeois paper. The objection is not worth a copper, and is insincere to boot, for the objectors know better than we what value should be attributed to Duranty's dispatches. Whoever has been to the Soviet Union and understood the mechanism of the Stalin apparatus, especially of its information system, knows that Duranty occupies one of the most imortant steps on the backstairs of the Kremlin today. For that matter, merely to have read his daily dispatches for the last few years should suffice to indicate conclusively that he accurately describes the policy of the C. P. S. U. in domestic and international affairs from the intimate point of view of the Stalin faction.

In the upper circles, at least, of the American Communist Party he is tacitly regarded as an entirely authentic spokesman of the ruling régime. It is from a faithful study of his dispatches that the party leaders receive their first intimations regarding new policies and new winds in the Soviet Union, and they act in strict accordance with them, quite confident that the official informaiton that comes later on will conform in every essential with Duranty's outlines. It is to be expected that the scriveners of the party press will assume a comical posture of righteousness and indignation because we quote Duranty as an authentic representative of Stalin. The posture will be especially ridiculous to anybody who knows the editorial workings of the **Daily Worker** and **Freiheit** intimately. Aside from the two or three lines received once in a while by "Inprecorr cable", the current Russian news of these two party dailies is composed almost exclusively of badly re-written copies of Duranty's dispatches. The latter are the first to be clipped by the editor and handed to a hack to be re-written, sometimes as a "special report to the **Daily Worker**". We hope that this anticipatory reply will save us the pain of witnessing another parade of outraged virtue by the journalistic Tartuffes of the party.

Behind the Scenes in the Russian Party

(Continued from page 4)

who declared that the Political Bureau no longer exists, but only a group of four: Stalin, Molotov (?), Kaganovitch and Ordjonikidze. But Syrzov submitted right away. They tell how, during the transfer of the affairs of the People's Commissariat of the R. S. F. S. R. (to Sulimov), he broke out into sobs and generally acted like a milksop. He said while whimpering that all his political actions ought to be considered the result of his sick condition, that his nerves are upset, that he needs a cure, etc. . . .

It is extremely interesting to recall the declaration made by Stalin in a conversation with Lominadze at the time the latter enjoyed his full confidence; "The Communist International represents nothing by itself and is kept up only by the aid of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Withdraw the support and nothing will remain of the Comintern". This assertion is extraordinarily cynical, even for Stalin! Lominadze used it in the factional struggle. Stalin, of course, denies the whole conversation.

The last declaration of repentance by Bucharin, which, as is known, was more or less accepted by the Central Commitee, and for criticism of which Boguschevsky, the ever-servile bootlicker, was covered with abuse, was preceded by the following events. At one of the meetings of the Central Committee, where he was thoroughly riddled, Bucharin left weeping, and then turned in the declaration demanded of him. In party circles the rumor obstinately persists, and it is very close to the truth, that Bucharin threatened the Political Bureau to commit suicide if the persecutions were not called off. This, it appears, produced a certain effect.

I have recently had the occasion to speak with a provincial member of the Central Control Commission, an old friend. He declared flatly that the majority of the members of the C. C. C. were in their very hearts with Bucharin's position, and that they consider the present situation in the party catastrophic. "Bucharin is right; as for Stalin, he is ruining the country," those are his actual words. And they are completely overwhelmed by the organizational measures taken against Rykov and Bucharin. The state of nervous panic of these members of the C. C. C. is obvious from the fact that after having interrupted the conversation in the middle of the sentence, he held his head and ran out of the room. Another, more outstanding member of the C. C. C. expressed himself, according to my friend, in the following way: "Before, it was Trotsky who was right against Stalin; now it 's Bucharin."

A highly esteemed member of the C. C. C. replies to the question, "What does he think of the Syrzov-Lominadze faction?" by saying, "In general, I don't do any more thinking." Further, during the discussion at the Central Committee plenum on the Bucharin question, a very spicy detail was revealed about Miliutin. He kept on interrupting Bucharin with insolent remarks: "Tell us rather about yourself," and so on. Bucharin could contain himself no longer and retoried: "And you'd better tell us how you were first in our ranks. The party knows nothing about it, does it?" That is how it was revealed that Miliutin fell directy from the followers of Bucharin into the rank of his traducers. That is how the ardor of his over-anxious zeal is to be explained.

- Organization Notes -

PHILADELPHIA—On April 12 comrade Cannon spoke at a very well attended meeting of the Liberal League open forum on the subject. "Prospects of the American Revolution". The discussion following gave comrade Cannon the opportunity to make clear our position as an integral part of the Communist movement and to present a criticism of the bureaucrats as a necessary means of defense of Communism as against those holding the view of the degeneracy of the Communist party beyond regeneration.

In the afternon comrade Cannon had an opportunity to attend a branch meeting and work out further plans particularly for taking up effectively the defense of our two comrades, Goodman and Morgenstern, now under indictment for sedition. The local I. L. D. under orders from its "higher-ups", despite its expressed character of an organization for defense of all class war prisoners, is attempting to get away with complete sabotage of this case. It openly refuses to furnish the same defense accorded other class war prisoners, thus endangering the position of the revolutionary movement as a whole. It does make vague promises to provide purely legal aid. That promise came about only after severe protest had been made by workers in several parts of the country. Such protests were made, for example, by Gerry Allard of Illinois, a member of the National Committee of the I. L. D., by workers in Boston, New Haven, and elsewhere. Our Philadelphia branch is preparing to do its utmost to compel the I. L. D. actually to function as a defense organization of class war prisoners. Meanwhile all of our comrade, including those under indictment, are continuing the work of building the Left Opposition in the most active manner possible.

MINNEAPOLIS—In this city our branch is now thoroughly taking up the leadership in organizing a broad working class united front for defense of the right of free speech. That is the burning issue in Minneapolis now and our branch has very correctly raised this slogan. City authorities, reinforced by extra policemen's clubs, are continuing their efforts to break up working class gatherngs, to attempt to outlaw workers' revolutionary organizations, and are thus making an attack upon the working class as a whole. The local fakers of the A. F. of L. unions are trailing in behind as closely as possible and making all sorts of maneuvers for expulsion of our members. The active campaign of our branch has so far prevented this.

A call for a conference has been issued around the slogan of "Fight for the right of free speech". The prestige and following our members have already attained due to their splendid militant record within the Minneapolis labor movement is sufficient guarantee that this united front conference will develop into a real effective movement. One of its tasks will be to focus the issue of the defense of the rights of workers during the campaign in the coming city elections. Thus the branch of the Left Opposition is already definitely the leading force in the fight for the right of the Communists to speak to the workers. It is carrying the Communist standard forward. The branch is following up energetically every step made forward with wide distribution of Communist literature.

OTHER CITIES—Our Chicago branch is organizing special Sunday drives in which all members participate in an organized manner to establish new contacts, circularize literature, and gather subscriptions to the **Militant.** The branch is dividing its forces into two competing teams. The results so far are quite gratifying, as will be noticed from the report in this issue of our subscription drive. The St. Louis branch has overcome its period of inactivity which has existed for some time. It is now proceeding to plan active work and to function better in a collective sense. Comrade Oehler spoke at a public meeting in St. Louis on April 16 during the time of the miners' convention, and also attended meetings of the branch, helping in planning future activities. We are sure we can expect better results from the St. Louis membership as a whole in the future. The Boston branch is becoming one of our livest group. Some of our members there are both active and influential forces in the trade unions. Others carry on active work in labor fraternal organizations and the unemployment movement. Compared to the size of membership, Boston has been doing about the best recently of all the branches in the disposing of literature. The New York branch, while not yet so very active in subscription hunting, is still the one having some of the best accomplishments to its record. Being the biggest unit, it naturally has better possibilities. This is one of the reasons why it has by far outstripped all the other branches in pushing forward our Program of Expansion. In financing contributions, the New York branch is the standard bearer.

HOW ABOUT THOSE SUBS.?

The drive for 500 new subscriptions and renewals will be extended for another three months, upon the request of some of the branches who haven't completed their quotas. They realize the importance of increasing the circulation of **The Militant** and ask for an opportunity to do their share, in this phase of our work.

The total received to date are 83, as follows:

Chicago	25	Boston	4
Minneapolis	16	Toronto	2
St. Louis	15	Cleveland	1
New York	11	Kansas City	2
Miscellaneous	7		

The Chicago Branch, which leads the drive, has initiated a plan which might well be copied by the other branches. This is how it works. The Branch divided itself into two competing teams. One headed by Rebecca Sacharow and the other by Hugo Oehler.

Each team got an equal number of members for co-operation in the work. Each Sunday morning the teams go visiting with the list of expired subs which was sent to all branches by the national office. Renewals are thus secured, and at the same time new subs. and trials are solicited from door to door. At the end of the drive, the teams securing the largest number will be declared the winner by the Branch.

In this connection we might add that a note in this column, giving comrade Sacharow full credit for the good work of Chicago, was due to the fact that the National Office was not aware of this plan at the time.

Comrade Goldberg of St. Louis who sent in 14 subscriptions in one mail refuses to accept the prize he is entitled to. He says this work was his contribution to the movement. Just the same the National Office is sending him one of Malkin's prison-made watch fobs, as a token of appreciation.

The Chicago Branch will undoubtedly win the copy of Trotsky's "My Life", and Minneapolis will most likely get the bound volume of **The Militant.** That is, unless New York gets busy and challenges these two branches.

Get your subs and renewals in before the inactivity of the summer months begins. Forward to 500 new subscriptions and renewals!

OUR PROGRAM OF EXPANSION

We have now accomplished the first step in bringing this program forward. The Pioneer Publishing Company has been launched and certificates are being forwarded to those having completed their contributions. There is, of course, plenty of opportunity left for others also to become certificate holders.

The first book of be published by the Pioneer Publishing Company will be the "Permanent Revolution", which is now already well on its way to completion. The price will be $1 cloth bound, and 50c paper cover. It will contain 210 pages. Certificate holders will receive this book at a discount of 33%. The second book to be published will be comrade Trotsky's work on the Chinese Revolution, and once the financial support flows in more regularly, publication of additional books will follow, including Marxian classics.

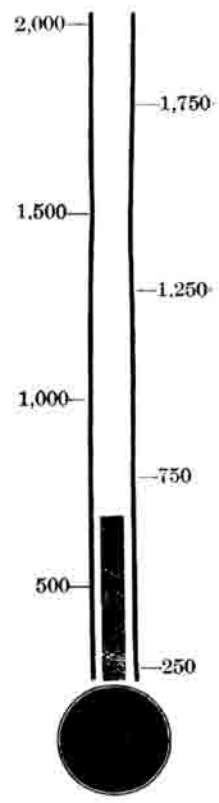
The total sum received for the expansion program in April 28 was $641.75. This represents somewhat of a revised schedule as it credits on this account funds received for expenses in the activities in the mine fields. Those having followed the regular progress of the financial record of the program will note that now comrades from cities throughout the country are becoming active participants. The branches in Minneapolis and Kansas City, however, appear to have done the best so far in organizing collections from sympathetic workers.

Our next steps in the Expansion Program are the convening of the Second National Conference and the Weekly **Militant.** With a little more energy from our members and sympathizers in such a manner that collection of financial contribntions takes place much more speedily, we will soon reach the point where the **Militant** will appear regularly every week.

Comrade Trotsky, in a letter to us dated April 4, greets our expansion program in the following words: "The educational work which you are carrying on, and which you are about to extend further, appears to me to be excellent. We cannot seriously approach the masses without steeling our own cadres theoretically in the process. For my own part, I shall do everything to come to the assistance of your publishing company in its development."

The itemized contributions, including funds received for activities in the mine fields, are as follows:

New York br. (mine fund)	75.00
M. Fisher (N. Y.)	3.00
Boston (Miners' Fund)	15.00
Geltman (N. Y.)	2.00
Von Borstel (N. Y.)	8.00
Minneapolis br. (mine fund)	25.00
M. Lewitt (N. Y.)	5.00
Cannon (N. Y.)	10.00
Jacob Capelis (N. Y.)	2.00
Sol Capelis (N. Y.)	2.00
A. B. (N Y.)	10.00
George Clarke (N. Y.)	6.00
Toronto br. Toronto br.	12.00
Shoe Worker (N. Y.)	2.00
	$177.00
Previously reported	464.75
To date	$641.75



The Slogan of the Six-Hour Day

DISCUSSION ARTICLE

(Continued from Last Issue)

The adoption of the six hour day slogan has been arrived at without considering thoroughly present or future conditions, the size of the Communist forces, the dedegree of class consciousness of the workers, etc. It is projected in an abstract visionary manner. Doubtlessly it is influenced by looking backward over the shoulder at the great eight-hour movement of 1886 and confusing the present situation with the conditions prevailing at that time.

The struggle for a shorter working day does not necessarily arise because of unemployment. It can arise from many other causes. Therefore, it is not always a political struggle. In connection with the practical necessity it mbst be raised to the level of a political struggle by the class conscious elements. In order to do this it is necessary to begin at the very bottom using every impulse of the working class to struggle. The slogan that focuses the attention on the political aspect of the problem must be drawn in such a way as to link it up securely with this elementary struggle at the bottom so as not to jeopardize it. The slogan should be **"The shorter working week with no reduction in pay."**

1886 and Today

We can in no way compare conditions with those of 1886. For one thing, the labor movement as a whole, over a period of years, had experienced an unprecedented growth. We do not have anything to compare with the zeal of the labor movement of that time. The struggle itself did not arise from a desire for a shorter working week because of unemployment but was largely guided by the idealistic approach of 8 hours a day for work, 8 hours for play, and 8 hours for sleep. Again, there was a vast army of workers who had already obtained very nearly the 8 hour day and it was only a small step from the number of hours of work previous to the 8-hour day, whereas today the bulk of workers are unorganized and are working in most cases considerably more than 8 hours, let alone six. The gap from 6 hours to the present working hours is very large indeed. In addition, the demand for the five day week is already before the working class thus the six hour day means in actuality a thirty hour week. This makes the demand seem all the more extreme when compared to the conditions that exist in most industries.

In raising the slogan of the six hour day in a general manner we will succeed in nothing but appearing visionary. This would be true even if the Communists forces were completely united (which is not the case and is another drawback) and therefore able to make a more concerted effort. Why make it six hours? Why not four or two? It has more than once been shown that all the work of the world can be done if property organized by a four-hour day. But we must be governed by actual conditions of the struggle and not by visionary aspirations. We must fight where it is practical for the 8-hour day, the five-day week, or whatever the situation and the industrial conditions make practical. In the mine fields alone where they have for a long time had little more than 30 hours work per week and perhaps in the railroad industry we can at this time begin an uncompromising fight for 6 hours. The purpose of the slogan is mainly to give the whole fight a political character, to assist in raising it to a political level and to link up the political struggle with the elementary no matter from what source it comes. A reduction of the working hours can be won only by direct struggle with each separate set of bosses and not by pressure on the government and in that sense it surely is much different than the fight for social insurance. On the field of direct industrial struggle we should not attempt to distinguish our policy from that of the reformists and others by the arithmetical difference between the amount of our demands. It cannot be stressed too often that we are free at all times to proclaim that in this age of modern machinery and unemployment six hours is more than enough and that we intend to go on fighting until it is achieved. Also that after that is won we will not stop there either but will go on fighting for four hours when the need arises. The slogan of six hours a day sounds Left yet I doubt if it is the proper slogan to be used at this time. History which has its own unimpeachable logic will very likely prove it to be a mistake.

—MIHELIC.

Note: The objections raised by comrade Mihelic to the position taken by the **Militant** in the disputed question will be dealt with in the reply by the editorial board which is to appear in the next issue of the paper.
—Ed.

SPRING FESTIVAL OF NEW YORK OPPOSITION BRANCH

The New York branch of the Communist League of America (Opposition) has announced its plan to hold a Spring Festival entertainment and dance at its headquarters, 84 East 10th Street, between 3rd and 4th Avenues. The affair will be held on Saturday, May 16, 1931, at 8 p. m. All rebel workers are cordially invited to attend the Festival to spend an entertaining evening and get acquainted with the New York Oppositionists. A number of special features are being arranged for and a good time is assured all who come.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

What we really need is a Weekly! Valuable material has to be held over from almost every issue because of the pressure of space in the semi-monthly. The next isue will contain an analysis of the recent events in the miners' movement, by Arne Swabeck; an article by comrade Trotsky on the situation in China and the problems of the Left Opposition there; and a good deal of other important material. Watch for it.

ANNOUNCING

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LETTERS from the MILITANTS

ON THE PARTY'S TURN IN THE NEEDLE TRADES

BOSTON.—

At the last council meeting of the Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union, Finegold reported for the National Board on the change in policy for the union. He declared that the N. B. had decided to start building oppositions in the old unions since we call and call the workers and they don't come to us, because the old union still controls their jobs and they are afraid of losing them.He pointed out the disadvantages laid upon us by being far away from the workers, letting the Amalgamated raise the dues, and many other things that were done over the heads of the workers. Were we to have had fighting oppositions, these things would not happen and we must now begin to work there energetically. We are not sending anybody back. he said, but intend to work through our sympathizers in the old unions.

He also made a long speech on the change in the governing of our union, about more democracy, about having separate branches for the various trades. But that was not a decision. We were still to get a communication and then discuss it.

Nevertheless, we had a discussion on working in the old unions. They always told the workers: We have nothing to do with the company unions and to work in the old unions means to give up our own union. They had to say these things to discredit the Opposition. There was, they said, no difference between us and the Lovestone policy. We both said that work must be carried on in the old unions.

Comrade Eva Weiner and I took the floor and spoke for the policy. We told them that it is about time they woke up. We should have done this work long ago. We do not mean that the workers must go back and liquidate the Left wing union, as some have expressed themselves, but that we are going to build oppositions of the workers who are there. A party member tried to attack our standpoint but we replied that the Opposition had said that this should be done some time ago, and that if the workers want to understand what the policy of the Oposition is, they should read the **Militant.**

Then Finegold tried to save the day. When the Opposition said we must work in the old unions, it was not yet the time to do it. He attacked our open letter to the party on unemployment, where we proposed to ask the socialist party and other labor organizations for a united front. The meeting was well advanced by then, and so it was adjourned, but I announced that if this question was to be raised we had something to say about it.

Last Monday, we had a membership meeting where the report was given again and a hot discussion took place. The workers are against it. They have been so much confused that they cannot get it straight. I took the floor again to present our viewpoint to the well-attended meeting where it could not be distorted. It seemed as though everyone opened his eyes wide and looked at me as though to say: We heard quite a different story about you!

When comrade Bleeker spoke here a few weeks ago, a worker attacked us by saying that our policy was like Lovestone's, to liquidate the union. Well, at the union meeting he rose and said: 'A few weeks ago I heard Sylvia Bleeker and she said the same thing I now hear from Finegold. I was the only one there to attack her. Now I wish she was here and speak from this platform. Why don't you say you are adopting their policy? What are you afraid of?"

In his summary, Finegold replied to everygody. Toward the end, he said: 'Now in regards to Sylvia. I wish she were here for I would have something to say to her. But she has a representative here and I will say this to her: When they proposed to work in the old unions it was ridiculous, for we controlled most of the workers [how long ago was that?] or a great many. The same applies to the Five Year Plan in Russia. When Trotsky advocated it, it was not yet the time and therefore he was dangeorous. Furthermore, we are not going to care what anybody says about our taking policies from this side or that. As long as the policy is a good one for the union we are going to use it."

I asked for the floor to answer his speech, but was not given it. The meeting was adjourned. But I answered many privately after the meeting and the opportunity will still present itself to answer Finegold and the others at coming meetings. It is clear that our position had not only been confirmed but immeasurably strengthened.

—JENNY.

MUSTEISM AND STALINISM AT THE MINERS CONVENTION

CHRISTOPHER, ILL.

The St. Louis miners' convention ended after three days of deliberation. On the whole, the convention was a real rank and file gathering, with the ideological control in the hands of the Muste forces. In every major instance the convention carried into effect the line of the Musteites which was purely negative, evading the real fight and further disintegrating the fighting front of the coal miners.

The rôle of the official party representatives in the convention was very bad. After calling upon the miners not to send delegates to the convention, they finally entered it with their disruptive tactics, slandering, villifying and generally making a provocative attempt to get kicked out of the hall, which might have happened had it not been for our own clear-cut constructive spirit.

I foresaw the possibility of the Musteites taking the course they did. Many comrades misjudged or overestimated the real motives of Musteism. They were for a while (before the opening of the convention) impressed with the idea that the Musteites would unhesitatingly form a new union. The political line and achievements of the Musteites prove their total bankruptcy in leading the workers in militant struggles. There is a huge difference between what they say and what they do.

The convention had before it these four problems;

1. Clean out all the fakers within the ranks;
2. To build a class struggle industrial union;
3. The right for minorities to exist;
4. To lay the basis for the broadest possible unity of all rank and file miners, which naturally includes the West Virginia union, the Southwest union and the National Miners Union.

The Stalinists fought against this line of action. Dan Wainniger, the only delegate supporting the party, actually supported our position.

As to Howat, he gave us the same old thing. His Kansas boys, the revolutions in South America, Central America and Spain as great acts—without an analysis of the real forces at work in these revolutions or explaining that they were bourgeois revolutions. His political incompetence was further demonstrated by his failure to mention the Russian revolution. On these points, it should be acknowledged that Howat knows very little about the international situation and seems to have secured his information from capitalist newspaper headlines. In his address, he explained the refusal to join the N. M. U. forces because of having first to submit to the dictation of New York "coal miners". He said he sympathized with the N. M. U. program and knew that the best fighters of the coal miners were N. M. U. members. He did not satisfactorily explain his position in the "Reorganized" U. M. W. A. He merely said that he had been **amazed** that Walker, Germer, Nesbit, etc., did not consult him about the reorganized movement's compromise with Lewis. This nearly made me fall off my seat with laughter. I is clear that Howat does not understand the scientific side of the labor movement at all and has served as a cover for the reactionaries in it.

* * *

I believe that we have accomplished results as a group within the coal miners' movement. Events will prove the correctness of our position and help us lay the foundations for the rejuvenation of a purer Communist movement in America along correct Marxian-Leninist lines.

As to future work, we hope to adopt a statement in our local union, expressing our view towards the convention, our desire to cooperate with the rank and file delegates of this convention and to push forward the work to realize the line of policy for which we fought so vigorously at St. Louis.

—GERRY ALLARD.

THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CARPENTERS' UNION

NEW YORK.—

Just as the unemployment situation becomes more acute, the aristocratic leadership of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America is riding its rank and file more determinedly to an abyss. The thirty percent who up till now were able to capture all the jobs in sight see the danger approaching when they hear the cries for the 6-hour day and 5-day week, division of work, etc.

The discrimination by the District Council against militants is no longer limited to individual members. Whole local unions take their place now, and are threatened, unless they blindly support the D. C., with the revocation of charters and destruction. Their boundaries are encroached upon by "loyal" D. C. members from other localities, and all sorts of bargains, many of them below the wage scale are struck with the bosses. The leaders have no desire to organize any more men, and the initiation fee has been raised to $250.00 in the Metropolitan district, while the apprenticeship committee recently appointed by the Council is hard at work to limit, if not to abandon, the apprenticeship system altogether.

Still ignorant of their economic surroundings, the bulk of the men are still under the influence of the D. C. and they conceive the problem before them as one of selecting and limiting the organization to such a number as will not compel them to take up the question of reduction of hours, not to speak of organizing the vast army of unorganized carpenters.

This is to be done, of course, at the expense of the militant members, and secondly of the old members: the militants ceaselessly denounce the fakers for bargaining with the bosses, and therefore endanger the fakers' jobs; the old aged, of whom there are over 35,000, all within a few years of being eligible to their disability donation or death benefit of $400.00, must be dealt with before they can receive the money.

And here is how it all happens: On account of their old age, they cannot get work, and without work they are unable to keep in good standing for any length of time, since this requires an annual fee of $28.00. There are no provisions in our by-laws whereby they can receive job protection; not even the special privilege card (which allows them to work under the wage scale) will help them any longer because they find many of their younger brothers working on the jobs without the privilege cards, but under the scale and with the full knowledge and consent of the business agent and the D. C.

Take, for instance, our old age Pension Home, at Lakeland, Florida, where every member past the age of 65 who has been in good standing for 25 years, and is unfortunate enough to be unable to provide for himself, is entitled to go. It would seem that anyone with such a record would have the use of the home cheerfully granted him. But what are the facts? Only one out of every 500 members gets that chance, and how does he get there? First, he must be well recommended by his local officers to the General Executive Board (no further explanation needed!). His case will be investigated and the findings given to the Directing Board of the Home with recommendations. There again the machine is put into motion, and with several hundred other applicants in the race, he may and may not be notified to report for entry at the Home.

The march towards ruin of the U. B. C. J. A., with its 300,000 membres is similar to that of the United Mine Workers, with a membership of 500,000 a few years ago, with the only expection that last summer Lewis bargained off to the bosses, on a five year term, one-fifth of his organization, out of about three sections of the whole United States. This is all that is necessary since most modern machines are operated to supply the market with coal on the basis of the 8-hour day and the old wage scale, leaving the other 400,000 members or ex-members of his organizations to the mercy of Coolidge's advice: Look for work in other industries. . . .

President Hutcheson aims, for next summer, to bargain his one-fifth of the members from all sections of the U. S. to the bosses, also on the 8-hour day basis and the present wage scale, with the "hope" that the other 240,000 members, under advice from Coolidge, will hunt for another industry and swell the army of the unemployed.

We say to these miners and to the carpenters, as well to the workers in the other industries: Don't let these labor fakers divde you into small groups and bargain some of you off while others of you are starving. Go to your meetings, find out what is wrong, and if any of the rank and file members makes an attack against the officers concerning grievances arising out of the job or the shop, stand by him, give him your support. Do not allow your officers to censor any correspondence to the local union, nor allow them to deny the floor to any delegation or committee from other organizations on any mission for which they seek the floor.

Aim and strive to eliminate all laws and rules which prevent the rank and file from criticizing the officers, or to discharge them when necessary for not serving the fullest interests of the membership.

If you find the industry on the bum, when we cannot get work, let us demand the 6-hour day without pay reduction, let us demand unemployment insurance at the expense of the owners of industry and guaranteed by the government. —W. H. H.

Letter of a Deported Oppositionist

A Muscovite has recently arrived in our midst. I communicate to you the essence of his remarks, even though, from all appearances the facts are a bit out of date and are known to you; he was incarcerated for some time before being exiled.

The capitulators are splitting up into numerous groups according to the particular phases of their decay. Radek is rotting away "indivdually" at an accelerated pace. Not only the rank and filers but also the capitulationist chiefs are doing all in their power to show that, from the point of view of personal and political relations, they have nothing in common with him. The most sincere say openly: "Radek has set himself the task of assuming a dirty and traitorous rôle." Some try to turn away the Radekists from the baser abominations. Radek is trying with all his strength to penetrate the governmental circles: he wants to have his inlets everywhere, and to be considered as one of their "men" (a "man" in the old Russian sense of the word). You know his "literary" works well enough for me not to have to expatiate upon them. I would like to tell you of a little characteristic fact of (how shall I say it mildly?) Radekist cynicism. Upon the request for aid to a deported and grievously ill Bolshevik, Radek refused and added: "He will return all the sooner." His methods are brief adn foul.

We are all informed of the ideological demonstration of the capitulators. They see things through very dark spectacles and by that seek to find an excuse for themselves. The well-known capitulator P. said to a restricted circle: "The situation is hopeless. Everything is on the brink of the abyss. We will swing with you (that is, with the Bolshevik-Leninists) from the same lantern." One must deduce from this that he capitulated in order to aggravate the "hopeless" situation. It is true that, leaving his exile, Radek said the same thing. It is needless to add that we view the perspectives otherwise.

We have learned of a curious fact, regarding Preobrazhensky. Telling us about it, the new arrival guaranteed its authenticity with "his head". It happened before the Sixteenth Congress. Preobrazhensky thought that the resolution of the Central Commitee on the exportation of grain (the large quantity of the exports) would lead to an acute and inevitable "civil war", etc., etc. . . . He wanted to come forward at the congress at all costs in order to warn against it.

"We must show as well as we can that we have returned to the party." The faction of the capitulators was seized with terror: they will expel again, they will exile, too. Pressure was exerted upon Preobrazhensky, and since he belongs to the "softies", he was dissuaded from it. This fact was held as a "rigorous" secret by the capitulators because they were afraid the "authorities" might learn of it, which would have been disastrous for their reputation, inconsistent enough without that. The rumor only became public recently.

To conclude with the capitulators, there remain only two words to say about the decrepit ancestors of all this small fry: Zinoviev and Kamenev. Both of them have finally passed over into the "academic" arena: Kamenev edits, in silence, the works of Herzen! Zinoviev has been named Rector of the University of Kazan: only illness prevented him from taking up his post. For a while, they wanted to entrust Kamenev with a diplomatic post (ambassador to London), but they changed their minds. That is how these people have "returned to the party".

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THE YOUNG VANGUARD

Youth Notes

THE YOUNG VANGUARD

In the last issue of the **Young Vanguard** we asked our readers for contributions. The response has been exceptionally poor. This immediately poses the question: Is there a need for a Young Vanguard? and, have we the forces to publish it with?

The National Youth Committee definitely answers these questions in the affirmative. The necessity of carrying on Left Opposition work among the youth, of crystallizing a group in the official Young Communist League and winning over its members, of propagating elementary Communist youth education, and of acting as the tribune of any independent activity we may carry on, can best be done with the aid of an organ of our own, a paper. At present this must take the form of a section of the **Militant.**

To publish such a section requires the cooperation of a number of comrades. We have enough young comrades in our League today to begin with. At the same time we welcome articles which express views contrary to those expressed above, that is, which contend that youth work in general is superfluous or that the Left Opposition should not carry on such activity.

Y. C. L. CONVENTION

The date for the Sixth Convention of the Young Communist League has been set for June 7, 8 and 9. The Young Worker of April 6 carries the official statement of the opening of the pre-convention discussion. The statement makes a rather weak and inadequate analysis of the events which has transpired since the last convention, May 1929. It states: "From one thousand members at the time of the Party convention, we have grown to more than two thousand members. This is only the beginning, and at the time of the Y. C. L. convention we must have at least four thousand members in our League." What hypocritical nonsense! First, the comparison of numerical strength should logically be made between today and the time of the last convention. But this would reveal that, even accepting official figures, the League has lost at least fifteen hundred members during this period of unprecedented opportunities. This of course must not be done! Second: on the occasion of the Party convention, the League claimed over seventeen hundred (1700) members. Now this same figure becomes one thousand. Well, what is seven hundred members to these mass workers? A mere trifle! (It is our opinion that the present total League membership is closer to seven hundred than to two thousand). Third: To call for and expect an increase of one thousand young workers in the League by June with the present inactivity of the League is the height of bureaucratic utopianism.

THE FREE YOUTH

The semi-monthly organ of the Young Peoples' Socialist League **"Free Youth"** sets as its purpose "To convey to young men and women as frankly and forcefully as possible the shortcomings of capitalism and the possibilities of socialism." Shortcomings of capitalism! Possibilities of socialism! What sort of militant, socialist, youth words are these? Shades of Liebknecht—Even the liberal Youth Section of the League for Reconciliation uses "stronger" language.

The four issues which have so far appeared fully substantiate such an interpretation. They contain a mixture of that mushy liberal and pacifist nonsense that one is accutsomed to read in any one of the other petty bourgeois youth publications in this country.

In the April 1 issue, **"Free Youth"** carries the caption "What the Young Socialist Means When He Talks of International Socialism" and the sub-caption "Here is the living power of Socialism thruout the world today". Under these captions there follows an account of the parliamentary strength of the European "socialist" parties. We learn—although we thought these people would try to forget it—that in England there is a "socialist" Premier with 289 "socialist" members of parliament; in Germany 152 "socialist" seats, etc. No wonder there is no mention of the bloody events in India, of the murder of Baghat Singh and his two fellow militants by the MacDonald Government; little wonder that **"Free Youth"** abstains from commenting on German politics, and the daily betrayals of "the living power of Socialism" in supporting reaction—against Communists protesting the Fascist murders in Hamburg etc., etc.! If this is what "the young socialist means when he talks of International socialism" we must say: Yes, this is indeed the "socialism" of the Hillquits, the Lees, the Vanderveldes, the MacDonalds. They are supporters and instruments of the capitalists in time of need. This is the kind of "socialism" we must struggle against crush and overcome in the course of the class war.

INDIAN YOUTH EXECUTED

On March 24 Baghat Singh and two of his co-workers were hanged by the Indian authorities for the alleged murder of Lieut. Col. Simpson in Lahore, in December 1928 and for participation in the so-called Lahore conspiracy, an anti-British move back in 1929. This murder, which must be put at the door of the British Labor Government and the "Left" Socialists, who demanded the release of all political prisoners except those involved in "acts of violence", led to big protests throughout the country.

In Cawpore, thirty persons were killed and more than one hundred injured at a demonstration held in protest of the execuion. Two companies of British troops and two hundred additional police were summoned to maintain order. For several days, rioting continued. In Bombay and Calcutta general strikes were held. When Mahatma Gandhi came to Karachi, he was greeted by a large group of workers, peasants and students with cries of: "Down with Gandhi", "Go back with your truce", "We want the murderer of Baghat Singh". According to reports, Bharat Sabha, a revolutionary youth, struck at Gandhi with the butt of a flag. The protest of the masses and especially the youth, against the murder of the three young revolutionists which came not accidentally on the heels of the infamous Gandhi Irwin agreement has taken on wide dimensions. It shows the possibility of a turn in the development of the Indian revolution. The recent failure of the petty bourgeois youth inside the Indian Youth League to give leadership is proved by their miserable failure at the recent Indian National Congress. Only a Communist party and under it a Communist Youth League, guided by Marxist strategy, tactics and leadership can lead the Indian masses on the correct road to revolution.

AGAINST THE R. O. T. C.

The struggle carried on by the Social Problems Club of New York City College against the Reserve Officers' Training Corps has once again brought to the fore the question of student anti-miltarist activities and so-called academic liberties. The Club president, Max Weiss, and ten colleagues were suspended for the remainder of the semester for protesting the censoring and confiscation of the first issue of the Club's paper, "Frontiers". The Club itself was dissolved.

This action was taken ostensibly for such innocent reasons as: the Club did not get permission to issue the bulletin, the Club had borrowed too much money, the bulletin is a product of an outside "radical organization", etc. The real reason for the suspensions, as a subsequent leaflet of the Club correctly pointed out, is the campaign of the organization against militarism and the R. O. T. C. Academic liberties are, as has often been proved and this time with especial clarity—rights which do not interfere with the authorities, of the college, the state and the social order.

The suspensions were however met with big protests. Social Problems' and Liberal Clubs of a number of universities, several college professors, and other groups sent in protests. A petition was circulated at City College demanding the reinstatement of the Club, of the eleven students suspended and the return of the confiscated issues of the "Frontiers".

The support of the Social Problems Club by these divers elements compelled the Board of Directors of the college to instruct the President to reinstate the Club, and ten of its members, and to return the confiscated copies of the "Frontiers". In a word, the status quo ante was established with one important exception: Weiss is to remain suspended for insubordination. Such militant action as that of Weiss' cannot go unpunished! The dignity of the authorities must be upheld!

The students should continue the fight against the R O T C. The struggle for the reinstatement of Max Weiss must go on.

"It is wholly inadequate that the youth should repeat our formulas. It is necessary that the youth should take the revolutionary formulas fighting transform them into flesh and blood, work out for themselves their own opinion with that courage which comes from sincere conviction and independence of character. Passive obedience, mechanical drill, characterlessness, obsequiousness, careerism, away with these things from the party."—Trotsky.

The Young Communist League Convention

The much postponed convention call of the Young Communist League has at last been issued. Under the aegis of a certain claimed growth in membership and other small alleged gains, fortified behind the unproved statement that these were made on the basis of a struggle against resistance to the correct line, the newest edition of leaders in charge of the Y. C. L. have at last ventured to open a pre-conventon discussion. For now they can show concrete results! Small gains, it is true, but anyhow gains.

However, it is not by such spurious methods that the Y. C. L. can grow and produce conscious, devoted, and ideologically equipped Communists. To us a convention and the discussion which must precede it, is a highly serious matter. To attempt to conceal the real facts, to avoid a discussion of the actual situation, to create confusion, all behind much noise and din about certain claimed new successes, is to vitiate the entire purpose of the convention. And on top of this to load on the membership the utterly unattainable and loud sounding task of doubling the membership from 2000 to 4000 during the pre-convention period, when more time must be allowed for every comrade in the Y. C. L. for study of the problems, for thought, for reading, and for discussion, is to make a farce and a mockery of a Communist convention.

For A Genuine Discussion

It is evident that the Stalinist bureaucrats do not want a free and genuine discussion. Under the pretense of a discussion they want a docile acceptance and approval of the policies and tactics prescribed, that is, a purely formal, superficial, pseudo-discussion which allows no real or serious difference of opinion. They want to confine the expression of the membership to inane and trivial remarks on how to apply the **"correct"** policy handed down from above. For the discussion to have any value whatsoever, the members of the League must assume a sharply critical attitude toward the leadership and its policies. This is necessary not only as a weapon against Stalinist opportunism, but doubly necessary for the Communist youth who in general must advance themselves ideologically. It is useful to recall in this connection the words of Lenin addressed to the third congress of the Russian Y. C. L.: "A Communist who would dream of boasting of his Communism on the basis of the ready made conclusions taught to him, without performing the most serious, the most difficult and persistent work, without understanding the facts of which he should be extremely critical, would be a miserable Communist indeed."

The strain in which the bureaucratic notes of the convention will be sung was sounded in the convention call: "In its beginning to carry out the line of the Young Communist International, our League had to struggle against resistance from sections of the leadership and the membership. It is in the last period on the basis of this struggle that the League can record certain gains." What is the meaning of such a statement contained in a convention call? It can only be interpreted as a warning in advance to discourage any discussion which raises fundamental problems. It draws the boundaries within which the discussion must flow: criticize yourself for not applying the **"correct"** line of the Stalinist leadership!

The statement itself, however, must raise two questions in the minds of the League members which should be directed to its authors: First, why is it that the whole League, including a section of its leadership, has been unable to absorb this correct line and apply it during a period of two years? Secondly, why don't you prove through concrete examples that it is the application of the correct line that caused the gains claimed, and the failure to apply or the wrong application that caused the decline?

The Real Situation

What is really the conditon of the Young Communst League? (See the Young Vanguard of March 1). This analysis must be made not upon the splurge of some momentary (and exaggerated gain) but upon the evaluation of the present situation in relation to the past two years. The following facts must be considered:

1. Isolation of the Y. C. L. from the young workers.
2. Absolute loss in membership (3400 at last convention, drop to 1000 at time of party convention, June 1930, at present 2000—an inflated official figure).
3. Very rapid turnovers in membership.
4. Low political understanding of membership, inexperienced and new.
5. No competent leading cadres.

These indices to the strength of the Y. C. L. are indisputable. In all probability even the most ardent defender of the Stalinist régime would not undertake to refute them, for the realities of the situation have too flagrantly exposed them. In fact they have for the most part been compelled to acknowledge them openly. They strike one all the more glaringly when constrasted to the objective situation which furnishes such good opportunities for the growth of the Y. C. L. The Stalinists do, however, dispute most vehemently the causes for this positively wretched situation. They protect themselves behind the worthless and unproved assertion that the reason lies in the failure of certain leading individuals and the membership to put into practice the infallible line.

In our opinion the immediate causes for the present enfeeblement of the League are as follows:

1. Ultra-Left and adventurist line based on the erroneous and anti-Leninist theory of the "third period".
2. Abandonment of youth policies and activities, tendency to transform Y. C. L. into a junior appendage of the party.
3. Bureaucratic régime.
4. Elimination of workers' democracy, that is, distortion of democratic centralism.
5. Inability of Y. C. L. to function as an educational organization that is, to make communists out of class conscious young workers. (We will elaborate on this point in a separate article).

The Root Causes

The basic explanation for the critical condition of the Y .C. L. is to be found in the general crisis which today afflicts the international Communist movement. This crisis has been developing since 1923. It had its inception in the struggle launched against the proletarian wing of the party led by comrade Trotsky. There crystallized the Right wing group of Rykov, Tomsky, and Bucharin, and the Centrist bureaucratic group of Stalin, both of which combined in a bloc against the Left wing. In the United States these tendencies are represented by the Lovestone group and the present Foster leadership respectively.

The Right wing reflects the pressure on the party of alien class forces hostile to the proletariat. The Centrist group of Stalin supporting itself on the bureaucratic apparatus has no independent policy of its own, but staggers between the Right and the Left. Up to about 1928 Stalin executed the policies of the Rights. These were embodied in the failure to restrict the growth of the Kulak in the Soviet Union, in the subordination of the Chinese Communist Party to the bourgeois Koumintang in the 1925-27 revolution, and in the opportunistic application of the united front in the Anglo-Russian committee. It was during this period that the Executive Committee of the Communist International gave its whole hearted support to Lovestone in leadership of the American party. Due to the rising militant mood of the working class and the pressure of the Left Opposition, the Centrists were compelled to break with the Rights. They veered toward the Left, but innately incapable of pursuing a consistent line they plunged into an ultra-Left adventurist one. At the present time circumstances are pushing them to retrace their steps to the right, and they are consequently headed for a new debacle of opportunism.

We cannot here in any way deal adequately with this question for space does not permit. Our purpose is merely to pose the question and arouse the members of the League to a study of it. No member of the League if he strives to be a serious Communist can avoid this study or neglect it for it concerns the very existence of the Communist movement. If the convention, despite the Stalinist bureaucrats, serves the purpose of stirring the young Communists to study and think about the burning and vital questions that confront the divided Communist movement then it will have been of benefit. The Left Opposition stands ready to answer any question that any member of the League wants to put to it for clarification and to facilitate in every way possible his approach to the road of Leninism.

* * *

As we go to press, the **"Young Worker"** announces the postponement of the convention to June 28.

—GEORGE RAY